This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY
Berkeley

EDWARD HENRY SCOTT.

V. 10

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY
Berkeley

Digitized by Google

Samuel Scott

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JONATHAN SWIFT, D. D.

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.

ARRANGED BY THOMAS SHERIDAN, A. M.

WITH

NOTES, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL.

A NEW EDITION, IN NINETEEN VOLUMES;

CORRECTED AND REVISED

BY JOHN NICHOLS, F. S. A. EDINBURGH AND PERTH.

VOLUME X.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, J. NICHOLS, R. BALDWIN, OTRIDGE AND SON, J. SEWELL, F. AND C. RIVINGTON, T. PAYNE, R. FAULDER, G. AND J. ROBINSON, R. LEA, J. NUNN, W. CUTHELL, T. EGERTON, CLARKE AND SON, VERNOR AND HOOD, J. SCATCHERD, T. KAY, LACKINGTON ALLEN AND CO., CARPENTER AND CO., MURRAY AND HIGHLEY, LONGMAN AND REES, CADELL JUN. AND DAVIES, T. BAGSTER, J. HARDING, AND J. MAWMAN.

1801.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

Digitized by Google

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

English - Alumnus

M. Brown, Printer, St. John's square.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

OF THE

TENTH VOLUME.

	Page
THE Difficulty of Knowing one's Self. A Sermon	1
A Sermon on the Trinity	19
On mutual Subjection	32
On the Testimony of Conscience	43
On brotherly Love	55
Upon the Martyrdom of King Charles	67
On bearing false Witness	84
On the poor Man's Contentment	97
On the wretched Condition of Ireland	109
Upon Sleeping in Church	124
On the Wisdom of this World	135
On doing Good	148
Prayers for Mrs. Johnson	160-165
Thoughts on Religion	166
On Mr. Collins's Discourse of Freethinking	171
A Letter to a Member of Parliament in Ireland, upon choosing a Speaker	203
Thoughts concerning the Repeal of the Test	212
A Treatise on good Manners	214
On the Death of Mrs. Johnson	222
Character of Mrs. Howard	235
Character of Primate Marsh	239
Thoughts on various Subjects	241
Bon Mots de Stella	249
Reasons against the Bill for settling the Tithe of Hemp, &c. by a Modus	252
An Account of the Court of Japan	267
A Letter on Mr. Maculla's Project about Halfpence	280
A Letter to the Writer of the occasional Paper	296
Of public Absurdities in England	303
Remarks on Bishop Burnet's History	308
Memoirs of Captain John Creichton	311

332177

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE DIFFICULTY OF KNOWING ONE'S SELF*.

2 KINGS, viii, PART OF THE 13TH VERSE.

And Hazael said, But what! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?

WE have a very singular instance of the deceitfulness of the heart, represented to us in the person of Hazael: who was sent to the prophet Elisha, to inquire of the Lord, concerning his master the king of Syria's recovery. For the man of God, having told him that the king might recover from the disorder he

* When I first gave this sermon to be published, I had some doubts whether it were genuine; for, though I found it in the same parcel with three others in the Dean's own hand, and there was a great similitude in the writing, yet as some of the letters were differently cut, and the hand in general much fairer than his, I gave it to the world as dubious. But as some manuscripts of his early poems have since fallen into my hands, transcribed by Stella, I found, upon comparing them, that the writing was exactly the same with that of the sermon; which was therefore copied by her. Swift, in his journal to that lady, takes notice that he had been her writing-master, and that there was such a strong resemblance between their hands, as gave occasion to some of his friends to rally him, upon seeing some of her letters addressed to him at the bar of the coffee-house, by asking him, how long he had taken up the custom of writing letters to himself? So that I can now fairly give it to the public as one of his, and not at all unworthy of the author.

Digitized by Google

was then labouring under, began to set and fasten his countenance upon him of a sudden, and to break out into the most violent expressions of sorrow, and a deep concern for it; whereupon, when Hazael, full of shame and confusion, asked, "Why weepeth my "lord?" he answered, "Because I know all the evil "that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel; their "strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young "men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash "their children, and rip up their women with child". Thus much did the man of God say and know of him, by a light darted into his mind from Heaven. But Hazael, not knowing himself so well as the other did, was startled and amazed at the relation, and would not believe it possible, that a man of his temper could ever run out into such enormous instances of cruelty and inhumanity. "What!" says he, "is "thy servant a dog, that he should do this great "thing?"

And yet, for all this, it is highly probable, that he was then that man he could not imagine himself to be; for we find him, on the very next day after his return, in a very treacherous and disloyal manner, murdering his own master, and usurping his kingdom; which was but a prologue to the sad tragedy, which he afterward acted upon the people of Israel.

And now the case is but very little better with most men, than it was with Hazael; however it cometh to pass, they are wonderfully unacquainted with their own temper and disposition, and know very little of what passeth within them; for, of so many proud, ambitious, revengeful, envying, and ill-natured persons that are in the world, where is there

Digitized by Google

there one of them, who, although he hath all the symptoms of the vice appearing upon every occasion, can look with such an impartial eye upon himself, as to believe that the imputation thrown upon him is not altogether groundless and unfair? who, if he were told, by men of a discerning spirit and a strong conjecture, of all the evil and absurd things which that false heart of his would at one time or other betray him into, would not believe as little, and wonder as much, as Hazael did before him? Thus for instance; tell an angry person, that he is weak and impotent, and of no consistency of mind; tell him, that such or such a little accident which he may then despise and think much below a passion, shall hereafter make him say and do several absurd, indiscreet, aud misbecoming things: he may perhaps own that he hath a spirit of resentment within him, that will not let him be imposed on; but he fondly imagines, that he can lay a becoming restraint upon it when he pleaseth, although it is ever running away with him into some indecency or other.

Therefore, to bring the words of my text to our present occasion, I shall endeavour, in a farther prosecution of them, to evince the great necessity of a nice and curious inspection into the several recesses of the heart, being the surest and the shortest method that a wicked man can take to reform himself: for let us but stop the fountain, and the streams will spend and waste themselves away in a very little time; but if we go about, like children, to raise a bank, and to stop the current, not taking notice all the while of the spring which continually feedeth it, when the next flood of temptation rises and breaketh in upon it, then we shall find that we have begun at the wrong

Digitized by Google

end of our duty; and that we are very little more the better for it, than if we had sat still, and made no advances at all.

But, in order to a clearer explanation of the point, I shall speak to these following particulars;

First, by endeavouring to prove, from particular instances, that man is generally the most ignorant creature in the world of himself.

Secondly, By inquiring into the grounds and reasons of his ignorance.

Thirdly, and lastly, By proposing several advantages, that do most assuredly attend a due improvement in the knowledge of ourselves.

First, then, To prove that man is generally the most ignorant creature in the world of himself.

To pursue the heart of man through all the instances of life, in all its several windings and turnings, and under that infinite variety of shapes and appearances which it putteth on, would be a difficult and almost impossible undertaking; so that I shall confine myself to such as have a nearer reference to the present occasion, and do, upon a closer view, show themselves through the whole business of repentance. For we all know what it is to repent; but whether he repenteth him truly of his sins or not, who can know it?

Now the great duty of repentance is chiefly made up of these two parts; a hearty sorrow for the follies and miscarriages of the time past, and a full purpose and resolution of amendment for the time to come. And now, to show the falseness of the heart in both these parts of repentance; and,

First,

Digitized by Google

First, As to a hearty sorrow for the sins and miscarriages of the time past. Is there a more usual thing than for a man to impose upon himself, by putting on a grave and demure countenance, by casting a severe look into his past conduct, and making some few pious and devout reflections upon it; and then to believe that he hath repented to an excellent purpose, without ever letting it step forth into practice, and show itself in a holy conversation? Nay, some persons do carry the deceit a little higher; who, if they can but bring themselves to weep for their sins, are then full of an ill-grounded confidence and security; never considering, that all this may prove to be no more than the very garb and outward dress of a contrite heart, which another heart, as hard as the nether millstone, may as well put on. For, tears and sighs, however in some persons they may be decent and commendable expressions of a godly sorrow, are neither necessary nor infallible signs of a true and unfeigned repentance. Not necessary, because sometimes, and in some persons, the inward grief and anguish of the mind may be too big to be expressed by so little a thing as a tear, and then it turneth its edge inward upon the mind; and, like those wounds of the body which bleed inwardly, generally proves the most fatal and dangerous to the whole body of sin: not infallible, because a very small portion of sorrow, may make some tender dispositions melt, and break out into tears; or a man may perhaps weep at parting with his sins, as he would bid the last farewell to an old friend.

But there is still a more pleasant cheat in this affair, that when we find a deadness, and a strange kind of unaptness and indisposition to all impressions of

Digitized by Google

religion, and that we cannot be as truly sorry for our sins as we should be, we then pretend to be sorry that we are not more sorry for them; which is not more absurd and irrational, than that a man should pretend to be very angry at a thing, because he did not know how to be angry at all.

But, after all, what is wanting in this part of repentance, we expect to make up in the next: and to that purpose we put on a resolution of amendment, which we take to be as firm as a house built upon a rock; so that, let the floods arise, and the winds blow, and the streams beat vehemently upon it, nothing shall shake it into ruin or disorder. We doubt not, upon the strength of this resolve, to stand fast and unmoved amid the storm of a temptation; and do firmly believe, at the time we make it, that nothing in the world will ever be able to make us commit those sins over again, which we have so firmly resolved against.

Thus many a time have we come to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with a full purpose of amendment, and with as full a persuasion of putting that same purpose into practice; and yet have we not all as often broke that purpose, and falsified that same persuasion, by starting aside, like a broken bow, into those very sins, which we then so solemnly and so confidently declared against.

Whereas had but any other person entered with us into a vow so solemn, that he had taken the Holy Sacrament upon it; I believe, had he but once deceived us by breaking in upon the vow, we should hardly ever after be prevailed upon to trust that man again, although we still continue to trust our own fears, against reason and against experience.

This

Digitized by Google

This indeed is a dangerous deceit enough, and will of course betray all those well-meaning persons into sin and folly, who are apt to take religion for a much easier thing than it is: but this is not the only mistake we are apt to run into; we do not only think sometimes that we can do more than we can do, but sometimes that we are incapable of doing so much: an errour of another kind indeed, but not less dangerous, arising from a diffidence and false humility. For how much a wicked man can do in the business of religion, if he would but do his best, is very often more than he can tell.

Thus nothing is more common than to see a wicked man running headlong into sin and folly, against his reason, against his religion, and against his God. Tell him, that what he is going to do will be an infinite disparagement to his understanding, which, at another time, he setteth no small value upon; tell him, that it will blacken his reputation, which he had rather die for than lose; tell him, that the pleasure of sin is short and transient, and leaveth a vexatious kind of sting behind it, which will very hardly be drawn forth; tell him, that this is one of those things for which God will most surely bring him to judgment, which he pretendeth to believe with a full assurance and persuasion: and yet, for all this, he shutteth his eyes against all conviction, and rusheth into the sin, like a horse into battle; as if he had nothing left to do, but, like a silly child, to wink hard, and to think to escape a certain and infinite mischief, only by endeavouring not to see it.

And now, to show that the heart hath given in a false report of the temptation, we may learn from this; that the same weak man would resist and master

Digitized by Google

same powerful temptation, upon considerations of infinitely less value than those which religion offereth; nay, such vile considerations, that the grace of God cannot without blasphemy be supposed to add any manner of force and efficacy to them. Thus, for instance, it would be a hard matter to dress up a sin in such soft and tempting circumstances, that a truly covetous man would not resist for a considerable sum of money: when neither the hopes of Heaven, nor the fears of Hell, could make an impression upon him before. But can any thing be a surer indication of the deceitfulness of the heart, than thus to show more courage, resolution, and activity, in an ill cause, than it doth in a good one? and to exert itself to better purpose, when it is to serve its own pride, or lust, or revenge, or any other passion, than when it is to serve God upon motives of the Gospel, and upon all the arguments that have ever been made use of to bring men over to religion and a good life? And thus, having shown that man is wonderfully apt to deceive and impose upon himself, in passing through the several stages of that great duty, repentance: I proceed now, in the

Second place, To inquire into the grounds and reasons of this ignorance, "and to show whence it "cometh to pass that man, the only creature in the "world that can reflect and look into himself, should "know so little of what passeth within him, and be "so very much unacquainted even with the standing "dispositions and complexion of his own heart". The prime reason of it is, because we so very seldom converse with ourselves, and take so little notice of what passeth within us: for a man can no more know his own heart, than he can know his own face, any other

Digitized by Google

other way than by reflexion: he may as well tell over every feature of the smaller portions of his face without the help of a looking-glass, as he can tell all the inward bents and tendencies of the soul, those standing features and lineaments of the inward man, and know all the various changes that this is liable to from custom, from passion, and from opinion, without a very frequent use of looking within himself.

For, our passions and inclinations are not always upon the wing, and always moving toward their respective objects; but retire now and then into the more dark and hidden recesses of the heart, where they lie concealed for a while, until a fresh occasion calls them forth again: so that not every transient, oblique glance upon the mind, can bring a man into a thorough knowledge of all its strength and weaknesses; for, a man may sometimes turn the eye of the mind inward upon itself, as he may behold his natural face in a glass, and go away, "and straight forget what "manner of man he was". But a man must rather sit down and unravel every action of the past day into all its circumstances and particularities, and observe how every little thing moved and affected him, and what manner of impression it made upon his heart: this, done with that frequency and carefulness which the importance of the duty doth require, would, in a short time, bring him into a nearer and more intimate acquaintance with himself.

But when men, instead of this, do pass away months and years in a perfect slumber of the mind, without once awaking it, it is no wonder they should be so very ignorant of themselves, and know very little more of what passeth within them than the very beasts which perish. But here it may not be amiss to inquire

Digitized by Google

inquire into the reasons why most men have so little conversation with themselves.

And first, Because this reflexion is a work and labour of the mind, and cannot be performed without some pain and difficulty: for, before a man can reflect upon himself, and look into his heart with a steady eye, he must contract his sight, and collect all his scattering and roving thoughts into some order and compass, that he may be able to take a clear and distinct view of them; he must retire from the world for a while, and be unattentive to all impressions of sense; and how hard and painful a thing must it needs be to a man of passion and infirmity, amid such a crowd of objects that are continually striking upon the sense, and soliciting the affections, not to be moved and interrupted by one or other of them! But,

Secondly, Another reason why we so seldom converse with ourselves, is, because the business of the world taketh up all our time, and leaveth us no portion of it to spend upon this great work and labour of the mind. Thus twelve or fourteen years pass away before we can well discern good from evil; and of the rest, so much goeth away in sleep, so much in the proper business of our callings, that we have none to lay out upon the more serious and religious employments. Every man's life is an imperfect sort of a circle, which he repeateth and runneth over every day; he hath a set of thoughts, desires, and inclinations, which return upon him in their proper time and order, and will very hardly be laid aside to make room for any thing new and uncommon: so that call upon him when you please to set about the study of his own heart, and you are sure to find him pre-

engaged;

Digitized by Google

engaged; either he has some business to do, or some diversion to take, some acquaintance that he must visit, or some company that he must entertain, or some cross accident hath put him out of humour, and unfitted him for such a grave employment. And thus it cometh to pass, that a man can never find leisure to look into himself, because he doth not set apart some portion of the day for that very purpose, but foolishly deferreth from one day to another, until his glass is almost run out, and he is called upon to give a miserable account of himself in the other world. But,

Thirdly, Another reason why a man doth not more frequently converse with himself, is, because such conversation with his own heart may discover some vice or some infirmity lurking within him, which he is very unwilling to believe himself guilty of. For can there be a more ungrateful thing to a man, than to find that upon a nearer view, he is not that person he took himself to be? that he had neither the courage, nor the honesty, nor the piety, nor the humility that he dreamed he had? that a very little pain, for instance, putteth him out of patience, and as little pleasure softeneth and disarmeth him into ease and wantonness? that he hath been at more pains, and labour, and cost, to be revenged of an enemy, than to oblige the best friend he hath in the world? that he cannot bring himself to say his prayers without a great deal of reluctancy; and when he doth say them, the spirit and fervour of devotion evaporate in a very short time; and he can scarcely hold out a prayer of ten lines, without a number of idle and impertinent, if not vain and wicked thoughts coming into his head? These are very unwelcome discoveries that a man may make of himself; so that it is no wonder that

Digitized by Google

that every one, who is already flushed with a good opinion of himself, should rather study how to run away from it, than how to converse with his own heart.

But farther. If a man were both able and willing to retire into his own heart, and to set apart some portion of the day for that very purpose; yet he is still disabled from passing a fair and impartial judgment upon himself, by several difficulties, arising partly from prejudice and prepossession, partly from the lower appetites and inclinations. And,

First, That the business of prepossession may lead and betray a man into a false judgment of his own heart. For we may observe, that the first opinion we take up of any thing, or any person, doth generally stick close to us; the nature of the mind being such, that it cannot but desire, and consequently endeavour to have some certain principles to go upon, something fixed and unmoveable, whereon it may rest and support itself. And hence it cometh to pass, that some persons are with so much difficulty brought to think well of a man they have once entertained an ill opinion of: and, perhaps, that too for a very absurd and unwarrantable reason. But how much more difficult then must it be for a man, who taketh up a fond opinion of his own heart long before he hath either years or sense enough to understand it, either to be persuaded out of it by himself, whom he loveth so well, or by another, whose interest or diversion it may be to make him ashamed of himself! Then,

Secondly, As to the difficulties arising from the inferiour appetites and inclinations; let any man look into his own heart, and observe in how different a light, and under what different complexions, any two sins

Digitized by Google

sins of equal turpitude and malignity do appear to him, if he hath but a strong inclination to the one, and none at all to the other. That which he hath an inclination to, is always dressed up in all the false beauty that a fond and busy imagination can give it; the other appeareth naked and deformed, and in all the true circumstances of folly and dishonour. Thus, Stealing is a vice that few gentlemen are inclined to; and they justly think it below the dignity of a man to stoop to so base and low a sin; but no principle of honour, no workings of the mind and conscience, not the still voice of mercy, not the dreadful call of judgment, nor any considerations whatever, can put a stop to that violence and oppression, that pride and ambition, that revelling and wantonness, which we every day meet with in the world. Nay, it is easy to observe very different thoughts in a man of the sin that he is most fond of, according to the different ebbs and flows of his inclination to it. For, as soon as the appetite is alarmed, and seizeth upon the heart, a little cloud gathereth about the head, and spreadeth a kind of darkness over the face of the soul, whereby it is hindered from taking a clear and distinct view of things; but no sooner is the appetite tired and satiated, but the same cloud passeth away like a shadow; and a new light springing up in the mind of a sudden, the man seeth much more, both of the folly and of the danger of the sin, than he did before.

And thus, having done with the several reasons why man, the only creature in the world that can reflect and look into himself, is so very ignorant of what passeth within him, and so much unacquainted with the standing dispositions and complexions of his own heart: I proceed now, in the

Third

Digitized by Google

Third and last place, to lay down several advantages, that do, most assuredly, attend a due improvement in the knowledge of ourselves. And,

First, One great advantage is, that it tendeth very much to mortify and humble a man into a modest and low opinion of himself. For, let a man take a nice and curious inspection into all the several regions of the heart, and observe every thing irregular and amiss within him: for instance; how narrow and short sighted a thing is the understanding! upon how little reason do we take up an opinion, and upon how much less sometimes do we lay it down again! how weak and false ground do we often walk upon, with the biggest confidence and assurance! and how tremulous and doubtful are we very often, where no doubt is to be made! Again: how wild and impertinent, how busy and incoherent a thing is the imagination, even in the best and wisest men; insomuch, that every man may be said to be mad, but every man doth not show it! Then, as to the passions; how noisy, how turbulent, and how tumultuous are they! how easily are they stirred and set a going, how eager and hot in the pursuit, and what strange disorder and confusion do they throw a man into; so that he can neither think, nor speak, nor act, as he should do, while he is under the dominion of any one of them!

Thus, let every man look with a severe and impartial eye into all the distinct regions of the heart; and no doubt, several deformities and irregularities, that he never thought of, will open and disclose themselves upon so near a view; and rather make the man ashamed of himself than proud.

Secondly, A due improvement in the knowledge of

Digitized by Google

of ourselves doth certainly secure us from the sly and insinuating assaults of flattery. There is not in the world a baser and more hateful thing than flattery; it proceedeth from so much falseness and insincerity in the man that giveth it, and often discovereth so much weakness and folly in the man that taketh it, that it is hard to tell which of the two is most to be blamed. Every man of common sense can demonstrate in speculation, and may be fully convinced, that all the praises and commendations of the whole world, can add no more to the real and intrinsic value of a man, than they can add to his stature. And yet, for all this, men of the best sense and piety, when they come down to the practice, cannot forbear thinking much better of themselves, when they have the good fortune to be spoken well of by other persons.

But the meaning of this absurd proceeding seemeth to be no other than this; there are few men that have so intimate an acquaintance with their own hearts, as to know their own real worth, and how to set a just rate upon themselves; and therefore they do not know but that he who praises them most, may be most in the right of it. For, no doubt, if a man were ignorant of the true value of a thing he loved as well as himself, he would measure the worth of it according to the esteem of him who biddeth most for it, rather than of him that biddeth less.

Therefore, the most fallible way to disentangle a man from the snares of flattery, is, to consult and study his own heart; for whoever does that well, will hardly be so absurd as to take another man's word, before his own sense and experience.

Thirdly, Another advantage from this kind of study is this, that it teacheth a man how to behave himself

Digitized by Google

himself patiently, when he has the ill fortune to be censured and abused by other people. For a man, who is thoroughly acquainted with his own heart, doth already know more evil of himself than any body else can tell him: and when any one speaketh ill of him, he rather thanketh God that he can say no worse: for, could his enemy but look into the dark and hidden recesses of the heart, he considereth what a number of impure thoughts he might there see brooding and hovering, like a dark cloud upon the face of the soul; that there he might take a prospect of the fancy, and view it acting over the several scenes of pride, of ambition, of envy, of lust, and revenge; that there he might tell how often a vicious inclination hath been restrained, for no other reason, but just to save the man's credit or interest in the world; and how many unbecoming ingredients have entered into the composition of his best actions. And now, what man in the whole world would be able to bear so severe a test? to have every thought and inward motion of the heart laid open and exposed to the views of his enemies? But,

Fourthly, and lastly; another advantage of this kind is, that it maketh men less severe upon other people's faults, and less busy and industrious in spreading them. For a man, employed at home, inspecting into his own failings, hath not leisure to take notice of every little spot and blemish that lieth scattered upon others; or, if he cannot escape the sight of them, he always passes the most easy and favourable construction upon them. Thus, for instance, does the ill he knoweth of a man proceed from an unhappy temper and constitution of body? he then considereth with himself, how hard a thing it is,

Digitized by Google

is, not to be born down with the current of the blood and spirits; and accordingly layeth some part of the blame upon the weakness of human nature, for he hath felt the force and rapidity of it within his own breast; although perhaps, in another instance, he remembereth how it rageth and swelleth by opposition; and, although it may be restrained, or diverted for a while, yet it can hardly ever be totally subdued.

Or, has the man sinned out of custom? he then, from his own experience, traceth a habit into the very first rise and imperfect beginnings of it; and can tell by how slow and insensible advances it creepeth upon the heart; how it worketh itself by degrees into the very frame and texture of it, and so passeth into a second nature; and consequently he hath a just sense of the great difficulty for him to learn to do good, who hath been long accustomed to do evil.

Or, Lastly, Hath a false opinion betrayed him into a sin? he then calleth to mind what wrong apprehensions he hath made of some things himself; how many opinions, that he once made no doubt of, he hath, upon a stricter examination, found to be doubtful, and uncertain; how many more to be unreasonable and absurd. He knoweth farther, that there are a great many more opinions that he hath never yet examined into at all, and which, however, he still believeth, for no other reason, but because he hath believed them so long already without a reason.

Thus, upon every occasion, a man intimately acquainted with himself consulteth his own heart, and maketh every man's case to be his own, and so puts the most favourable interpretation upon it. Let every man therefore look into his own heart, before he beginneth to abuse the reputation of another; and then

Digitized by Google

he will hardly be so absurd as to throw a dart that will so certainly rebound and wound himself. And thus, through the whole course of his conversation, let him keep an eye upon that one great comprehensive rule of Christian duty, on which hangeth not only the law and the prophets, but the very life and spirit of the Gospel too; "Whatsoever ye would that "men should do unto you, do ye even so unto "them." Which rule that we may all duly observe, by throwing aside all scandal and detraction, all spite and rancour, all rudeness and contempt, all rage and violence, and whatever tendeth to make conversation and commerce either uneasy or troublesome, may the God of peace grant, for Jesus Christ his sake, &c.

Consider what hath been said; and the Lord give you a right understanding in all things. To whom, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

THE TRINITY.

(First printed in 1744.)

I EPISTLE GENERAL OF ST. JOHN, V. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.

THIS day being set apart to acknowledge our belief in the Eternal Trinity, I thought it might be proper to employ my present discourse entirely upon that subject; and I hope to handle it in such a manner, that the most ignorant among you may return home better informed of your duty in this great point, than probably you are at present.

It must be confessed, that by the weakness and indiscretion of busy, or at best of well-meaning people, as well as by the malice of those who are enemies to all revealed religion, and are not content to possess their own infidelity in silence, without communicating it to the disturbance of mankind; I say, by these means, it must be confessed, that the doctrine of the Trinity hath suffered very much, and made Christianity suffer along with it. For these two things must be granted: first, that men of wicked lives would be

Digitized by Google

very glad there were no truth in Christianity at all; and secondly, if they can pick out any one single article in the Christian religion, which appears not agreeable to their own corrupted reason, or to the arguments of those bad people who follow the trade of seducing others, they presently conclude, that the truth of the whole Gospel must sink along with that one article. Which is just as wise, as if a man should say, because he dislikes one law of his country, he will therefore observe no law at all; and yet that one law may be very reasonable in itself, although he does not allow it, or does not know the reason of the lawgivers.

Thus it hath happened with the great doctrine of the Trinity; which word is indeed not in Scripture, but was a term of art invented in the earlier times to express the doctrine by a single word, for the sake of brevity and convenience. The doctrine then as delivered in holy scripture, though not exactly in the same words, is very short, and amounts only to this; that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are each of them God, and yet there is but One God. For as to the word Person, when we say there are three Persons; and as to those other explanations in the Athanasian creed this day read to you (whether compiled by Athanasius or not) they were taken up three hundred years after Christ to expound this doctrine; and I will tell you upon what occasion. About that time there sprang up a heresy of people called Arians, from one Arius the leader of them. These denied our Saviour to be God, although they allowed all the rest of the Gospel, wherein they were more sincere than their followers among us. Thus the Christian world was divided into two parts, till at length by the zeal

Digitized by Google

zeal and courage of St. Athanasius, the Arians were condemned in a general council, and a creed formed upon the true faith, as St. Athanasius hath settled it. This creed is now read at certain times in our churches, which although it is useful for edification to those who understand it, yet since it contains some nice and philosophical points which few people can comprehend, the bulk of mankind is obliged to believe no more than the scripture doctrine, as I have delivered it; because that creed was intended only as an answer to the Arians in their own way, who were very subtle disputers.

But this heresy having revived in the world about a hundred years ago, and continued ever since; not out of a zeal to truth, but to give a loose to wickedness by throwing off all religion; several divines, in order to answer the cavils of those adversaries to truth and morality, began to find out farther explanations of this doctrine of the Trinity by rules of philosophy; which have multiplied controversies to such a degree, as to beget scruples that have perplexed the minds of many sober Christians, who otherwise could never have entertained them.

I must therefore be bold to affirm, that the method taken by many of those learned men to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, hath been founded upon a mistake.

It must be allowed, that every man is bound to follow the rules and directions of that measure of reason which God hath given him; and indeed he cannot do otherwise, if he will be sincere, or act like a man. For instance: if I should be commanded by an angel from Heaven to believe it is midnight at noon-day; yet I could not believe him. So if I

Digitized by Google

were directly told in Scripture that three are one, and one is three, I could not conceive or believe it in the natural common sense of that expression, but must suppose that something dark or mystical was meant, which it pleased God to conceal from me and from all the world. Thus in the text, "There are Three that bear record," &c. Am I capable of knowing and defining, what union and what distinction there may be in the divine nature, which possibly may be hid from the angels themselves? Again, I see it plainly declared in Scripture, that there is but one God; and yet I find our Saviour claiming the prerogative of God in knowing men's thoughts; in saying "He and his Father are one;" and "before Abra-"ham was, I am." I read, that the disciples worshipped him: That Thomas said to him, "My Lord "and my God:" and St. John, chap. i. "In the "beginning was the Word, and the Word was with "God, and the Word was God." I read likewise that the Holy Ghost bestowed the power of working miracles, and the gift of tongues, which, if rightly considered, is as great a miracle as any, that a number of illiterate men should of a sudden be qualified to speak all the languages then known in the world, such as could be done by the inspiration of God alone. From these several texts it is plain, that God commands us to believe there is a union, and there is a distinction; but what that union, or what that distinction is, all mankind are equally ignorant, and must continue so, at least till the day of judgment, without some new revelation.

But because I cannot conceive the nature of this union and distinction in the divine nature, am I therefore to reject them as absurd and impossible, as I would

Digitized by Google

would if any one told me that three men are one, and one man is three? We are told, that a man and his wife are one flesh; this I can comprehend the meaning of; yet, literally taken, it is a thing impossible. But the apostle tells us, "We see but in part, and we know but in part;" and yet we would comprehend all the secret ways and workings of God.

Therefore I shall again repeat the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is positively affirmed in Scripture: that God is there expressed in three different names, as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost; that each of these is God, and that there is but one God. But this union and distinction are a mystery utterly unknown to mankind.

This is enough for any good Christian to believe on this great article, without ever inquiring any farther. And this can be contrary to no man's reason, although the knowledge of it is hid from him.

But there is another difficulty of great importance among those who quarrel with the doctrine of the Trinity, as well as with several other articles of Christianity; which is, that our religion abounds in mysteries, and these they are so bold as to revile as cant, imposture, and priestcraft. It is impossible for us to determine, for what reasons God thought fit to communicate some things to us in part, and leave some part a mystery: but so it is in fact, and so the holy scriptures tell us in several places. For instance: the resurrection and change of our bodies are called mysteries by St. Paul; our Saviour's incarnation is another; the kingdom of God is called a mystery by our Saviour, to be only known to his disciples; so is faith and the word of God by St. Paul: I omit many others. So that to declare against all mysteries with-

Digitized by Google

out distinction or exception, is to declare against the whole tenour of the New Testament.

There are two conditions, that may bring a mystery under suspicion. First, when it is not taught and commanded in holy writ; or secondly, when the mystery turns to the advantage of those who preach it to others. Now as to the first, it can never be said, that we preach mysteries without warrant from holy scripture, although I confess this of the Trinity may have sometimes been explained by human invention, which might perhaps better have been spared. As to the second, it will not be possible to charge the protestant priesthood with proposing any temporal advantage to themselves by broaching, or multiplying, or preaching of mysteries. Does this mystery of the Trinity, for instance, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, bring the least profit or power to the preachers? No; it is as great a mystery to themselves as it is to the meanest of their hearers; and may be rather a cause of humiliation, by putting their understanding, in that point, upon a level with the most ignorant of their flock. It is true indeed, the Roman church hath very much enriched herself by trading in mysteries, for which they have not the least authority from Scripture, and which were fitted only to advance their own temporal wealth and grandeur; such as transubstantiation, the worshipping of images, indulgences for sins, Purgatory, and masses for the dead; with many more. But it is the perpetual talent of those who have ill-will to our church, or a contempt for all religion, taken up by the wickedness of their lives, to charge us with the errours and corruptions of popery, which all protestants have thrown off near two hundred years: whereas those mysteries held by us, have

no

Digitized by Google

no prospect of power, pomp, or wealth, but have been ever maintained by the universal body of true believers from the days of the apostles, and will be so to the resurrection; neither will the gates of Hell prevail against them.

It may be thought perhaps a strange thing, that God should require us to believe mysteries, while the reason or manner of what we are to believe is above our comprehension, and wholly concealed from us: neither doth it appear at first sight, that the believing or not believing them doth concern either the glory of God, or contribute to the goodness or wickedness of our lives. But this is a great and dangerous mistake. We see what a mighty weight is laid upon faith, both in the Old and New Testament. In the former we read, how the faith of Abraham is praised, who could believe that God would raise from him a great nation, at the very time that he was commanded to sacrifice his only son, and despaired of any other issue: and this was to him a great mystery. Our Saviour is perpetually preaching faith to his disciples, or reproaching them with the want of it; and St. Paul produceth numerous examples of the wonders done by faith. And all this is highly reasonable; for, faith is an entire dependence upon the truth, the power, the justice, and the mercy of God; which dependence will certainly incline us to obey him in all things. So that the great excellency of faith consists in the consequence it hath upon our actions: as, if we depend upon the truth and wisdom of a man, we shall certainly be more disposed to follow his advice. Therefore let no man think that he can lead as good a moral life without faith as with it; for this reason, because he who hath no faith, cannot by the strength of his

Digitized by Google

his own reason or endeavours so easily resist temptations, as the other, who depends upon God's assistance in the overcoming of his frailties, and is sure to be rewarded for ever in Heaven for his victory over them. "Faith," says the apostle, "is the evidence of things "not seen:" he means, that faith is a virtue, by which any thing commanded us by God to believe, appears evident and certain to us, although we do not see, nor can conceive it; because by faith we entirely depend upon the truth and power of God.

It is an old and true distinction, that things may be above our reason, without being contrary to it. Of this kind are the power, the nature, and the universal presence of God, with innumerable other points. How little do those who quarrel with mysteries know of the commonest actions of nature! the growth of an animal, of a plant, or of the smallest seed, is a mystery to the wisest among men. If an ignorant person were told, that a loadstone would draw iron at a distance, he might say it was a thing contrary to his reason, and could not believe before he saw it with his eyes.

The manner whereby the soul and body are united, and how they are distinguished, is wholly unaccountable to us. We see but one part, and yet we know we consist of two; and this is a mystery we cannot comprehend, any more than that of the Trinity.

From what hath been said, it is manifest, that God did never command us to believe, nor his ministers to preach, any doctrine which is contrary to the reason he hath pleased to endow us with; but for his own wise ends has thought fit to conceal from us the nature of the thing he commands; thereby to try our faith

Digitized by Google

faith and obedience, and increase our dependence upon him.

It is highly probable, that if God should please to reveal unto us this great mystery of the Trinity, or some other mysteries in our holy religion, we should not be able to understand them, unless he would at the same time think fit to bestow on us some new powers or faculties of the mind, which we want at present, and are reserved till the day of resurrection to life eternal. "For now," as the apostle says, "we see through a glass darkly, but then face "to face."

Thus, we see, the matter is brought to this issue: we must either believe what God directly commands us in holy scripture, or we must wholly reject the Scripture, and the Christian religion which we pretend to profess. But this, I hope, is too desperate a step for any of us to make.

I have already observed, that those who preach up the belief of the Trinity, or of any other mystery, cannot propose any temporal advantage to themselves by so doing. But this is not the case of those who oppose these doctrines. Do they lead better moral lives than a good Christian? are they more just in their dealings? more chaste, or temperate, or charitable? Nothing at all of this; but, on the contrary, their intent is to overthrow all religion, that they may gratify their vices without any reproach from the world, or their own conscience; and are zealous to bring over as many others as they can to their own opinions; because it is some kind of imaginary comfort to have a multitude on their side.

There is no miracle mentioned in holy writ, which, if it were strictly examined, is not as much contrary to

Digitized by Google

to common reason, and as much a mystery, as this doctrine of the Trinity; and therefore we may with equal justice deny the truth of them all. For instance: it is against the laws of nature, that a human body should be able to walk upon the water, as St. Peter is recorded to have done; or that a dead carcase should be raised from the grave after three days, when it began to corrupt; which those who understand anatomy will pronounce to be impossible by the common rules of nature and reason. Yet these miracles, and many others, are positively affirmed in the Gospel; and these we must believe, or give up our holy religion to atheists and infidels.

I shall now make a few inferences and observations upon what has been said.

First, It would be well, if people would not lay so much weight on their own reason in matters of religion, as to think every thing impossible and absurd which they cannot conceive. How often do we contradict the right rules of reason in the whole course of our lives? Reason itself is true and just, but the reason of every particular man is weak and wavering, perpetually swayed and turned by his interests, his passions, and his vices. Let any man but consider, when he hath a controversy with another, though his cause be ever so unjust, though the whole world be against him, how blinded he is by the love of himself, to believe that right is wrong, and wrong is right, when it makes for his own advantage. Where is then the right use of his reason, which he so much boasts of, and which he would blasphemously set up to control the commands of the Almighty?

Secondly, When men are tempted to deny the mysteries of religion, let them examine and search into

Digitized by Google

into their own hearts, whether they have not some favourite sin, which is of their party in this dispute, and which is equally contrary to other commands of God in the Gospel. For, why do men love darkness rather than light? The Scripture tells us, "Because "their deeds are evil;" and there can be no other reason assigned. Therefore, when men are curious and inquisitive to discover some weak sides in Christianity, and inclined to favour every thing that is offered to its disadvantage, it is plain they wish it were not true; and those wishes can proceed from nothing but an evil conscience; because, if there be truth in our religion, their condition must be miserable.

And therefore, thirdly, men should consider, that raising difficulties concerning the mysteries in religion, cannot make them more wise, learned, or virtuous; better neighbours, or friends, or more serviceable to their country; but, whatever they pretend, will destroy their inward peace of mind by perpetual doubts and fears arising in their breasts. And God forbid we should ever see the times so bad, when dangerous opinions in religion will be a means to get favour and preferment; although even in such a case, it would be an ill traffick to gain the world, and lose our own souls. So that upon the whole it will be impossible to find any real use toward a virtuous or happy life, by denying the mysteries of the Gospel.

Fourthly, Those strong unbelievers, who expect that all mysteries should be squared and fitted to their own reason, might have somewhat to say for themselves, if they could satisfy the general reason of mankind in their opinions; but herein they are miserably defective, absurd, and ridiculous; they strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel: they can believe that the world

Digitized by Google

world was made by chance; that God doth not concern himself with things below; will neither punish vice nor reward virtue; that religion was invented by cunning men to keep the world in awe; with many other opinions equally false and detestable, against the common light of nature as well as reason; against the universal sentiments of all civilized nations, and offensive to the ears even of a sober heathen.

Lastly, Since the world abounds with pestilent books particularly written against this doctrine of the Trinity; it is fit to inform you, that the authors of them proceed wholly upon a mistake: they would show how impossible it is, that three can be one, and one can be three; whereas the Scripture saith no such thing, at least in that manner they would make it: but only that there is some kind of unity and distinction in the divine nature, which mankind cannot possibly comprehend: thus the whole doctrine is short and plain, and in itself incapable of any controversy: since God himself hath pronounced the fact, but wholly concealed the manner. And therefore many divines, who thought fit to answer those wicked books, have been mistaken too by answering fools in their folly; and endeavouring to explain a mystery, which God intended to keep secret from us. And as I would exhort all men to avoid reading those wicked books written against this doctrine, as dangerous and pernicious; so I think they may omit the answers, as unnecessary. This I confess will probably affect but few or none among the generality of our congregations, who do not much trouble themselves with books, at least of this kind. However, many, who do not read themselves, are seduced by others that do, and thus become unbelievers upon trust and at second

Digitized by Google

second hand; and this is too frequent a case: for which reason, I have endeavoured to put this doctrine upon a short and sure foot, levelled to the meanest understanding; by which we may, as the apostle directs, be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear.

And thus I have done with my subject, which probably I should not have chosen, if I had not been invited to it by the occasion of this season, appointed on purpose to celebrate the mysteries of the Trinity, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, wherein we pray to be kept stedfast in this faith; and what this faith is I have shown you in the plainest manner I could. For, upon the whole, it is no more than this: God commands us, by our dependence upon his truth, and his holy word, to believe a fact that we do not understand. And this is no more than what we do every day in the works of nature, upon the credit of men of learning. Without faith we can do no works acceptable to God; for, if they proceed from any other principle, they will not advance our salvation; and this faith, as I have explained it, we may acquire without giving up our senses, or contradicting our reason. May God of his infinite mercy inspire us with true faith in every article and mystery of our religion, so as to dispose us to do what is pleasing in his sight; and this we pray through Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the mysterious incomprehensible One GOD, be all honour and glory now and for evermore! *Amen.*

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

MUTUAL SUBJECTION.

(First printed in 1744.)

I ST. PETER, V. 5.

—— *Yea, all of you be subject one to another.*

THE apostle having in many parts of this epistle given directions to Christians concerning the duty of subjection or obedience to superiours; in the several instances of the subject to the prince, the child to his parent, the servant to his master, the wife to her husband, and the younger to the elder; doth here, in the words of my text, sum up the whole, by advancing a point of doctrine, which at first may appear a little extraordinary; "Yea, all of you," saith he, "be subject one to another." For it should seem, that two persons cannot properly be said to be subject to each other, and that subjection is only due from inferiours to those above them: yet St. Paul hath several passages to the same purpose. For he exhorts the Romans, "in honour to prefer one ano-"ther;" and the Philippians, "that in lowliness of "mind they should each esteem other better than "themselves;" and the Ephesians, "that they should "submit themselves one to another in the fear of the "Lord."

Digitized by Google

"Lord." Here we find these two great apostles recommending to all Christians this duty of mutual subjection. For we may observe by St. Peter, that having mentioned the several relations which men bear to each other, as governor and subject, master and servant, and the rest which I have already repeated, he makes no exception, but sums up the whole with commanding "all to be subject one to another." Whence we may conclude, that this subjection due from all men to all men, is something more than the compliment of course, when our betters are pleased to tell us they are our humble servants, but understand us to be their slaves.

I know very well, that some of those who explain this text apply it to humility, to the duties of charity, to private exhortations, and to bearing with each other's infirmities; and it is probable the apostle may have had a regard to all these. But, however, many learned men agree, that there is something more understood, and so the words in their plain natural meaning must import; as you will observe yourselves, if you read them with the beginning of the verse, which is thus; "Likewise ye younger submit your-"selves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject "one to another." So that, upon the whole, there must be some kind of subjection due from every man to every man, which cannot be made void by any power, preeminence, or authority whatsoever. Now what sort of subjection this is, and how it ought to be paid, shall be the subject of my present discourse.

As God hath contrived all the works of nature to be useful, and in some manner a support to each other, by which the whole frame of the world, under his providence, is preserved and kept up; so among

Digitized by Google

mankind our particular stations are appointed to each of us by God Almighty, wherein we are obliged to act, as far as our power reacheth, toward the good of the whole community. And he who doth not perform that part assigned him toward advancing the benefit of the whole, in proportion to his opportunities and abilities, is not only a useless, but a very mischievous member of the publick: because he takes his share of the profit, and yet leaves his share of the burden to be born by others, which is the true principal cause of most miseries and misfortunes in life. For a wise man, who does not assist with his counsels; a great man, with his protection; a rich man, with his bounty and charity; and a poor man, with his labour; are perfect nuisances in a commonwealth. Neither is any condition of life more honourable in the sight of God than another; otherwise he would be a respecter of persons, which he assures us he is not: for he hath proposed the same salvation to all men, and hath only placed them in different ways or stations to work it out. Princes are born with no more advantages of strength or wisdom, than other men; and, by an unhappy education, are usually more defective in both, than thousands of their subjects. They depend for every necessary of life upon the meanest of their people: besides, obedience and subjection were never enjoined by God to humour the passions, lusts, and vanities of those who demand them from us; but we are commanded to obey our governours, because disobedience would breed seditions in the state. Thus servants are directed to obey their masters, children their parents, and wives their husbands; not from any respect of persons in God, but because otherwise there would be

Digitized by Google

be nothing but confusion in private families. This matter will be clearly explained, by considering the comparison which St. Paul makes between the church of Christ, and the body of man: for the same resemblance will hold, not only to families and kingdoms, but to the whole corporation of mankind. "The "eye," saith he, "cannot say unto the hand, I have "no need of thee: nor again the hand to the foot, I "have no need of thee. Nay, much more, those "members of the body which seem to be more fee- "ble, are necessary: and whether one member suf- "fer, all the members suffer with it; or one mem- "ber be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." The case is directly the same among mankind. The prince cannot say to the merchant, I have no need of thee; nor the merchant to the labourer, I have no need of thee. Nay, much more those members, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. For the poor are generally more necessary members of the commonwealth than the rich: which clearly shows, that God never intended such possessions for the sake and service of those to whom he lends them; but because he hath assigned every man his particular station to be useful in life, and this for the reason given by the apostle, "that there may be no schism "in the body."

From hence may partly be gathered the nature of that subjection, which we all owe to one another. God Almighty hath been pleased to put us into an imperfect state, where we have perpetual occasion of each other's assistance. There is none so low, as not to be in a capacity of assisting the highest; nor so high, as not to want the assistance of the lowest.

It plainly appears from what hath been said, that

Digitized by Google

no one human creature is more worthy than another in the sight of God, farther than according to the goodness or holiness of their lives; and that power, wealth, and the like outward advantages, are so far from being the marks of God's approving or preferring those on whom they are bestowed, that, on the contrary, he is pleased to suffer them to be almost engrossed by those who have least title to his favour. Now, according to this equality wherein God hath placed all mankind with relation to himself, you will observe, that in all the relations between man and man, there is a mutual dependence, whereby the one cannot subsist without the other. Thus, no man can be a prince without subjects, nor a master without servants, nor a father without children. And this both explains and confirms the doctrine of the text: for where there is a mutual dependence there must be a mutual duty, and consequently a mutual subjection. For instance, the subject must obey his prince, because God commands it, human laws require it, and the safety of the publick makes it necessary; for the same reasons we must obey all that are in authority, and submit ourselves not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, whether they rule according to our liking or not. On the other side, in those countries that pretend to freedom, princes are subject to those laws which their people have chosen; they are bound to protect their subjects in liberty, property, and religion, to receive their petitions, and redress their grievances: so that the best prince is, in the opinion of wise men, only the greatest servant of the nation; not only a servant to the publick in general, but in some sort to every man in it. In the like manner, a servant owes obedience, and diligence, and faith-

Digitized by Google

faithfulness to his master; from whom at the same time he hath a just demand for protection, and maintenance, and gentle treatment. Nay, even the poor beggar hath a just demand of an alms from the rich man; who is guilty of fraud, injustice, and oppression, if he does not afford relief according to his abilities.

But this subjection we all owe one another, is no where more necessary than in the common conversations of life; for without it there could be no society among men. If the learned would not sometimes submit to the ignorant, the wise to the simple, the gentle to the froward, the old to the weaknesses of the young, there would be nothing but everlasting variance in the world. This our Saviour himself confirmed by his own example; for he appeared in the form of a servant, and washed his disciples feet, adding those memorable words, "Ye call me Lord "and Master, and ye say well, for so I am. If I "then your Lord and Master wash your feet, how "much more ought ye to wash one another's feet?" Under which expression of washing the feet, is included all that subjection, assistance, love, and duty, which every good Christian ought to pay his brother, in whatever station God hath placed him. For the greatest prince, and the meanest slave, are not, by infinite degrees so distant, as our Saviour and those disciples, whose feet he vouchsafed to wash.

And although this doctrine of subjecting ourselves to one another may seem to grate upon the pride and vanity of mankind, and may therefore be hard to be digested by those who value themselves upon their greatness or their wealth: yet it is really no more than what most men practise upon other occasions. For, if our neighbour who is our inferiour comes to

Digitized by Google

see us, we rise to receive him, we place him above us, and respect him as if he were better than ourselves; and this is thought both decent and necessary, and is usually called good manners. Now the duty required by the apostle, is only, that we should enlarge our minds, and that what we thus practise in the common course of life, we should imitate in all our actions and proceedings whatsoever; since our Saviour tells us, that every man is our neighbour, and since we are so ready in the point of civility to yield to others in our own houses, where only we have any title to govern.

Having thus shown you, what sort of subjection it is, which all men owe one another, and in what manner it ought to be paid, I shall now draw some observations from what hath been said.

And first; A thorough practice of this duty of subjecting ourselves to the wants and infirmities of each other, would utterly extinguish in us the vice of pride.

For, if God has pleased to intrust me with a talent, not for my own sake, but for the service of others, and at the same time hath left me full of wants and necessities, which others must supply; I can then have no cause to set any extraordinary value upon myself, or to despise my brother, because he hath not the same talents which were lent to me. His being may probably be as useful to the publick, as mine; and therefore, by the rules of right reason, I am in no sort preferable to him.

Secondly; 'Tis very manifest from what has been said, that no man ought to look upon the advantages of life, such as riches, honour, power, and the like, as his property, but merely as a trust, which God hath

Digitized by Google

hath deposited with him to be employed for the use of his brethren; and God will certainly punish the breach of that trust, though the laws of man will not, or rather indeed cannot; because the trust was conferred only by God, who has not left it to any power on earth to decide infallibly, whether a man makes a good use of his talents or not, or to punish him where he fails. And therefore God seems to have more particularly taken this matter into his own hands, and will most certainly reward, or punish us, in proportion to our good, or ill performance in it. Now, although the advantages, which one possesseth more than another, may in some sense be called his property with respect to other men, yet with respect to God they are, as I said, only a trust; which will plainly appear from hence: if a man does not use those advantages to the good of the publick, or the benefit of his neighbour, it is certain he doth not deserve them, and consequently that God never intended them for a blessing to him; and on the other side, whoever does employ his talents as he ought, will find, by his own experience, that they were chiefly lent him for the service of others; for, to the service of others he will certainly employ them.

Thirdly, if we could all be brought to practise this duty of subjecting ourselves to each other, it would very much contribute to the general happiness of mankind: for this would root out envy and malice from the heart of man; because you cannot envy your neighbour's strength, if he make use of it to defend your life, or carry your burden: you cannot envy his wisdom, if he gives you good counsel; nor his riches if he supplies you in your wants; nor his greatness, if he employs it to your protection. The miseries of

Digitized by Google

life are not properly owing to the unequal distribution of things; but God Almighty, the great King of Heaven, is treated like the kings of the earth, who, although perhaps intending well themselves, have often most abominable ministers and stewards, and those generally the vilest, to whom they intrust the most talents. But here is the difference, that the princes of this world see by other men's eyes, but God sees all things; and therefore, whenever he permits his blessings to be dealt among those who are unworthy, we may certainly conclude, that he intends them only as a punishment to an evil world, as well as to the owners. It were well, if those would consider this, whose riches serve them only as a spur to avarice, or as an instrument to their lusts; whose wisdom is only of this world, to put false colours upon things, to call good evil, and evil good, against the conviction of their own consciences; and lastly, who employ their power and favour in acts of oppression or injustice, in misrepresenting persons and things, or in countenancing the wicked, to the ruin of the innocent.

Fourthly, The practice of this duty of being subject to one another, would make us rest contented in the several stations of life, wherein God hath thought fit to place us; because it would, in the best and easiest manner, bring us back as it were to that early state of the Gospel, when Christians had all things in common. For, if the poor found the rich disposed to supply their wants; if the ignorant found the wise ready to instruct and direct them; or if the weak might always find protection from the mighty; they could none of them, with the least pretence of justice, lament their own condition.

From

Digitized by Google

From all that hath been hitherto said, it appears, that great abilities of any sort, when they are employed as God directs, do but make the owners of them greater and more painful servants to their neighbour, and the publick: however, we are by no means to conclude from hence, that they are not really blessings, when they are in the hands of good men. For, first, what can be a greater honour than to be chosen one of the stewards and dispensers of God's bounty to mankind? What is there that can give a generous spirit more pleasure and complacency of mind, than to consider, that he is an instrument of doing much good? that great numbers owe to him, under God, their subsistence, their safety, their health, and the good conduct of their lives? The wickedest man upon earth takes a pleasure in doing good to those he loves; and therefore surely a good Christian, who obeys our Saviour's commands of loving all men, cannot but take delight in doing good even to his enemies. God, who gives all things to all men, can receive nothing from any; and those among men, who do the most good, and receive the fewest returns, do most resemble the Creator: for which reason St. Paul delivers it as a saying of our Saviour, that, "it is more blessed to give than re-"ceive". By this rule, what must become of those things, which the world values as the greatest blessings, riches, power, and the like, when our Saviour plainly determines, that the best way to make them blessings is to part with them? Therefore, although the advantages, which one man hath over another, may be called blessings, yet they are by no means so in the sense the world usually understands. Thus, for example, great riches are no blessings in themselves:

Digitized by Google

selves: because the poor man with the common necessaries of life enjoys more health, and has fewer cares without them: how then do they become blessings? No otherwise than by being employed in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, rewarding worthy men, and in short, doing acts of charity and generosity. Thus likewise, power is no blessing in itself, because private men bear less envy, and trouble, and anguish without it. But when it is employed to protect the innocent, to relieve the oppressed, and to punish the oppressor, then it becomes a great blessing.

And so, lastly, even great wisdom is, in the opinion of Solomon, not a blessing in itself: for "in "much wisdom is much sorrow"; and men of common understanding, if they serve God, and mind their callings, make fewer mistakes in the conduct of life, than those who have better heads. And yet wisdom is a mighty blessing, when it is applied to good purposes, to instruct the ignorant, to be a faithful counsellor either in publick or private, to be a director to youth, and to many other ends needless here to mention.

To conclude: God sent us into the world to obey his commands, by doing as much good, as our abilities will reach, and as little evil, as our many infirmities will permit. Some he hath only trusted with one talent, some with five, and some with ten. No man is without his talent; and he that is faithful or negligent in a little, shall be rewarded or punished, as well as he that hath been so in a great deal.

Consider what hath been said, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON THE

TESTIMONY OF CONSCIENCE.

(First printed in 1744.)

2 COR. i. 12.

——*For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience.*

THERE is no word more frequently in the mouths of men than that of conscience, and the meaning of it is in some measure generally understood: however, because it is likewise a word extremely abused by many people, who apply other meanings to it, which God Almighty never intended; I shall explain it to you in the clearest manner I am able. The word Conscience properly signifies that knowledge which a man hath within himself of his own thoughts and actions. And because if a man judgeth fairly of his own actions, by comparing them with the law of God, his mind will either approve or condemn him, according as he hath done good or evil; therefore this knowledge or conscience may properly be called both an accuser and a judge. So that whenever our conscience accuseth us, we are certainly guilty; but we are not always

Digitized by Google

ways innocent, when it doth not accuse us: for very often through the hardness of our hearts, or the fondness and favour we bear to ourselves, or through ignorance or neglect, we do not suffer our conscience to take any cognisance of several sins we commit. There is another office likewise belonging to conscience, which is that of being our director and guide; and the wrong use of this hath been the occasion of more evils under the sun than almost all other causes put together. For, as conscience is nothing else but the knowledge we have of what we are thinking and doing; so it can guide us no farther than that knowledge reacheth: and therefore God hath placed conscience in us to be our director only in those actions, which Scripture and reason plainly tells us to be good or evil. But in cases too difficult or doubtful for us to comprehend or determine, there conscience is not concerned; because it cannot advise in what it doth not understand, nor decide where it is itself in doubt: but by God's great mercy, those difficult points are never of absolute necessity to our salvation. There is likewise another evil, that men often say, a thing is against their conscience, when really it is not. For instance: ask any of those who differ from the worship established, why they do not come to church: they will say, they dislike the ceremonies, the prayers, the habits, and the like; and therefore it goes against their conscience: but they are mistaken, their teacher hath put those words into their mouth; for a man's conscience can go no higher than his knowledge; and therefore till he has thoroughly examined by Scripture, and the practice of the ancient church, whether those points are blameable or not, his conscience cannot possibly direct him to condemn them. Hence have

Digitized by Google

have likewise arisen those mistakes about what is usually called liberty of conscience; which, properly speaking, is no more than a liberty of knowing our own thoughts; which liberty no one can take from us. But those words have obtained quite different meanings: liberty of conscience is nowadays not only understood to be the liberty of believing what men please, but also of endeavouring to propagate that belief as much as they can, and to overthrow the faith which the laws have already established, and to be rewarded by the publick for those wicked endeavours: and this is the liberty of conscience which the fanaticks are now openly in the face of the world endeavouring at with their utmost application. At the same time it cannot but be observed, that those very persons, who, under pretence of a publick spirit and tenderness toward their Christian brethren, are so zealous for such a liberty of conscience as this, are of all others the least tender to those who differ from them in the smallest point relating to government; and I wish I could not say, that the Majesty of the living God, may be offended with more security, than the memory of a dead prince. But the wisdom of the world at present seems to agree with that of the heathen emperor, who said, if the gods were offended, it was their own concern, and they were able to vindicate themselves.

But, although conscience hath been abused to those wicked purposes which I have already related, yet a due regard to the directions it plainly gives us, as well as to its accusations, reproaches, and advices, would be of the greatest use to mankind, both for their present welfare, and future happiness.

Therefore, my discourse at this time shall be directed

Digitized by Google

rected to prove to you, that there is no solid, firm foundation for virtue, but on a conscience which is guided by religion.

In order to this, I shall first show you the weakness and uncertainty of two false principles, which many people set up in the place of conscience, for a guide to their actions.

The first of these principles is, what the world usually calls moral honesty. There are some people, who appear very indifferent as to religion, and yet have the repute of being just and fair in their dealings; and these are generally known by the character of good moral men. But now, if you look into the grounds and the motives of such a man's actions, you shall find them to be no other than his own ease and interest. For example: you trust a moral man with your money in the way of trade, you trust another with the defence of your cause at law, and perhaps they both deal justly with you. Why? not from any regard they have for justice, but because their fortune depends upon their credit, and a stain of open publick dishonesty must be to their disadvantage. But let it consist with such a man's interest and safety to wrong you, and then it will be impossible you can have any hold upon him; because there is nothing left to give him a check, or put in the balance against his profit. For if he hath nothing to govern himself by but the opinion of the world, as long as he can conceal his injustice from the world, he thinks he is safe.

Besides, it is found by experience, that those men who set up for morality without regard to religion, are generally virtuous but in part; they will be just in their dealings between man and man; but if they find

Digitized by Google

find themselves disposed to pride, lust, intemperance, or avarice, they do not think their morality concerned to check them in any of these vices; because it is the great rule of such men, that they may lawfully follow the dictates of nature, wherever their safety, health, and fortune are not injured. So that upon the whole there is hardly one vice, which a mere moral man may not, upon some occasions, allow himself to practise.

The other false principle, which some men set up in the place of conscience to be their director in life, is what those who pretend to it call honour.

This word is often made the sanction of an oath; it is reckoned to be a great commendation to be a strict man of honour; and it is commonly understood, that a man of honour can never be guilty of a base action. This is usually the style of military men, of persons with titles, and of others who pretend to birth and quality. 'Tis true indeed, that in ancient times it was universally understood, that honour was the reward of virtue; but, if such honour as is nowadays going will not permit a man to do a base action, it must be allowed, there are few such things as base actions in nature. No man of honour, as that word is usually understood, did ever pretend that his honour obliged him to be chaste or temperate, to pay his creditors, to be useful to his country, to do good to mankind, to endeavour to be wise or learned, to regard his word, his promise, or his oath: or if he hath any of these virtues, they were never learned in the catechism of honour; which contains but two precepts, the punctual payment of debts contracted at play, and the right understanding the

Digitized by Google

the several degrees of an affront, in order to revenge it by the death of an adversary.

But suppose this principle of honour, which some men so much boast of, did really produce more virtues than it ever pretended to do; yet, since the very being of that honour depended upon the breath, the opinion, or the fancy of the people, the virtues derived from it could be of no long or certain duration. For example: suppose a man, from a principle of honour, should resolve to be just, or chaste, or temperate, and yet the censuring world should take a humour of refusing him those characters, he would then think the obligation at an end. Or, on the other side, if he thought he could gain honour by the falsest and vilest action (which is a case that very often happens) he would then make no scruple to perform it. And God knows, it would be an unhappy state, to have the religion, the liberty, or the property of a people lodged in such hands: which however hath been too often the case.

What I have said upon this principle of honour may perhaps be thought of small concernment to most of you, who are my hearers: however, a caution was not altogether unnecessary; since there is nothing by which not only the vulgar, but the honest tradesman, hath been so much deceived, as this infamous pretence to honour in too many of their betters.

Having thus shown you the weakness and uncertainty of those principles, which some men set up in the place of conscience to direct them in their actions; I shall now endeavour to prove to you, that there is no solid, firm foundation of virtue, but in a conscience directed by the principles of religion.

There

Digitized by Google

There is no way of judging how far we may depend upon the actions of men, otherwise than by knowing the motives, and grounds, and causes of them; and if the motives of our actions be not resolved and determined into the law of God, they will be precarious and uncertain, and liable to perpetual changes. I will show you what I mean by an example: suppose a man thinks it his duty to obey his parents, because reason tells him so, because he is obliged by gratitude, and because the laws of his country command him to do so: if he stops here, his parents can have no lasting security; for an occasion may happen, wherein it may be extremely his interest to be disobedient, and where the laws of the land can lay no hold upon him: therefore, before such a man can safely be trusted, he must proceed farther, and consider, that his reason is the gift of God; that God commanded him to be obedient to the laws, and did moreover in a particular manner enjoin him to be dutiful to his parents; after which, if he lays due weight upon those considerations, he will probably continue in his duty to the end of his life: because no earthly interest can ever come in competition to balance the danger of offending his Creator, or the happiness of pleasing him. And of all this his conscience will certainly inform him, if he hath any regard to religion.

Secondly; Fear and hope are the two greatest natural motives of all men's actions: but neither of these passions will ever put us in the way of virtue, unless they be directed by conscience. For, although virtuous men do sometimes accidentally make their way to preferment, yet the world is so corrupted, that no man can reasonably hope to be rewarded in it

Digitized by Google

merely upon account of his virtue. And consequently the fear of punishment in this life, will preserve men from very few vices, since some of the blackest and basest do often prove the surest steps to favour; such as ingratitude, hypocrisy, treachery, malice, subornation, atheism, and many more, which human laws do little concern themselves about. But, when conscience placeth before us the hopes of everlasting happiness, and the fears of everlasting misery, as the reward and punishment of our good or evil actions; our reason can find no way to avoid the force of such an argument, otherwise than by running into infidelity.

Lastly, Conscience will direct us to love God, and to put our whole trust and confidence in him. Our love of God will inspire us with a detestation for sin, as what is of all things most contrary to his divine nature: and if we have an entire confidence in him, that will enable us to subdue and despise all the allurements of the world.

It may here be objected, if conscience be so sure a director to us Christians in the conduct of our lives, how comes it to pass that the ancient heathens, who had no other lights but those of nature and reason, should so far exceed us in all manner of virtue, as plainly appears by many examples they have left on record?

To which it may be answered; first, those heathens were extremely strict and exact in the education of their children; whereas among us this care is so much laid aside, that the more God has blessed any man with estate or quality, just so much the less in proportion is the care he takes in the education of his children, and particularly of that child which is to inherit

Digitized by Google

herit his fortune; of which the effects are visible enough among the great ones of the world. Again, those heathens did in a particular manner instil the principle into their children of loving their country; which is so far otherwise nowadays, that of the several parties among us, there is none of them that seem to have so much as heard whether there be such a virtue in the world, as plainly appears by their practices, and especially when they are placed in those stations where they can only * have opportunity of showing it. Lastly; the most considerable among the heathens did generally believe rewards and punishments in a life to come; which is the great principle for conscience to work upon: whereas too many of those, who would be thought the most considerable among us, do, both by their practices and their discourses, plainly affirm, that they believe nothing at all of the matter.

Wherefore, since it hath manifestly appeared, that a religious conscience is the only true solid foundation upon which virtue can be built, give me leave, before I conclude, to let you see how necessary such a conscience is, to conduct us in every station and condition of our lives.

That a religious conscience is necessary in any station, is confessed even by those who tell us that all religion was invented by cunning men, in order to keep the world in awe. For, if religion, by the confession of its adversaries, be necessary toward the well-governing of mankind; then every wise man in power will be sure, not only to choose out for every

* Where they can *only* have, &c. Here the word *only* is not in its proper place: it should be— "*where only* they can have opportunity of showing it."

Digitized by Google

station under him such persons as are most likely to be kept in awe by religion, but likewise to carry some appearance of it himself, or else he is a very weak politician. And accordingly in any country, where great persons affect to be open despisers of religion, their counsels will be found at last, to be fully as destructive to the state, as to the church.

It was the advice of Jethro to his son-in-law Moses, to "provide able men, such as fear God, men "of truth, hating covetousness," and to place such over the people; and Moses, who was as wise a statesman at least as any in this age, thought fit to follow that advice. Great abilities, without the fear of God, are most dangerous instruments, when they are trusted with power. The laws of man have thought fit, that those who are called to any office of trust, should be bound by an oath to the faithful discharge of it: but an oath is an appeal to God, and therefore can have no influence except upon those who believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that seek him; and a punisher of those who disobey him: and therefore, we see, the laws themselves are forced to have recourse to conscience in these cases, because their penalties cannot reach the arts of cunning men, who can find ways to be guilty of a thousand injustices without being discovered, or at least without being punished. And the reason why we find so many frauds, abuses, and corruptions where any trust is conferred, can be no other, than that there is so little conscience and religion left in the world; or at least that men, in their choice of instruments, have private ends in view, which are very different from the service of the publick. Besides, it is certain, that men who profess to have no religion,

Digitized by Google

religion, are full as zealous to bring over proselytes, as any papist or fanatick can be. And, therefore, if those who are in station high enough to be of influence or example to others; if those (I say) openly profess a contempt or disbelief of religion, they will be sure to make all their dependents of their own principles; and what security can the publick expect from such persons, whenever their interests, or their lusts, come into competition with their duty? It is very possible for a man, who hath the appearance of religion, and is a great pretender to conscience, to be wicked and a hypocrite; but it is impossible for a man, who openly declares against religion, to give any reasonable security that he will not be false, and cruel, and corrupt, whenever a temptation offers, which he values more than he does the power wherewith he was trusted. And if such a man doth not betray his cause and his master, it is only because the temptation was not properly offered, or the profit was too small, or the danger was too great. And hence it is, that we find so little truth or justice among us: because there are so very few, who, either in the service of the publick, or in common dealings with each other, do ever look farther than their own advantage, and how to guard themselves against the laws of the country; which a man may do by favour, by secrecy, or by cunning, though he breaks almost every law of God.

Therefore, to conclude: It plainly appears, that unless men are guided by the advice and judgment of conscience founded on religion, they can give no security that they will be either good subjects, faithful servants of the publick, or honest in their

Digitized by Google

mutual dealings; since there is no other tie, through which the pride, or lust, or avarice, or ambition of mankind, will not certainly break one time or other.

Consider what has been said, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

BROTHERLY LOVE.

HEB. xiii. 1.

Let brotherly love continue.

IN the early times of the Gospel, the Christians were very much distinguished from all other bodies of men, by the great and constant love they bore to each other; which, although it was done in obedience to the frequent injunctions of our Saviour and his apostles, yet, I confess, there seemeth to have been likewise a natural reason, that very much promoted it. For the Christians then were few and scattered, living under persecution by the heathens round about them, in whose hands was all the civil and military power; and there is nothing so apt to unite the minds and hearts of men, or to beget love and tenderness, as a general distress. The first dissensions between Christians took their beginning from the errours and heresies that arose among them; many of those heresies, sometimes extinguished, and sometimes reviving, or succeeded by others, remain to this day; and having been made instruments to the pride, avarice, or ambition of ill-designing men, by extinguishing brotherly love, have been the cause

Digitized by Google

of infinite calamities, as well as corruptions of faith and manners, in the Christian world.

The last legacy of Christ was peace and mutual love; but then he foretold, that he came to send a sword upon the earth: the primitive Christians accepted the legacy, and their successors down to the present age have been largely fulfilling his prophecy. But whatever the practice of mankind hath been, or still continues, there is no duty more incumbent upon those who profess the Gospel, than that of brotherly love; which whoever could restore in any degree among men, would be an instrument of more good to human society, than ever was, or will be done by all the statesmen and politicians in the world.

It is upon this subject of brotherly love, that I intend to discourse at present, and the method I observe shall be as follows:

I. First, I will inquire into the causes of this great want of brotherly love among us.

II. Secondly, I will lay open the sad effects and consequences, which our animosities and mutual hatred have produced.

III. Lastly, I will use some motives and exhortations, that may persuade you to embrace brotherly love, and continue in it.

I. First, I shall enquire into the causes of this great want of brotherly love among us.

This nation of ours hath, for a hundred years past, been infested by two enemies, the papists and fanaticks: who, each in their turns, filled it with blood and

Digitized by Google

and slaughter, and, for a time, destroyed both the church and government. The memory of these events hath put all true protestants, equally upon their guard against both these adversaries, who, by consequence, do equally hate us. The fanaticks revile us, as too nearly approaching to popery; and the papists condemn us as bordering too much on fanaticism. The papists, God be praised, are, by the wisdom of our laws, put out of all visible possibility of hurting us; besides, their religion is so generally abhorred, that they have no advocates or abettors among protestants to assist them. But the fanaticks are to be considered in another light; they have had, of late years, the power, the luck, or the cunning, to divide us among ourselves; they have endeavoured to represent all those who have been so bold as to oppose their errours and designs, under the character of persons disaffected to the government; and they have so far succeeded, that nowadays, if a clergyman happens to preach with any zeal and vehemence against the sin and danger of schism, there will not want too many, in his congregation, ready enough to censure him as hot and high-flying, an inflamer of men's minds, an enemy to moderation, and disloyal to his prince. This hath produced a formed and settled division between those who profess the same doctrine and discipline; while they who call themselves moderate, are forced to widen their bottom, by sacrificing their principles and their brethren, to the incroachments and insolence of dissenters; who are therefore answerable, as a principal cause of all that hatred and animosity now reigning among us.

Another cause of the great want of brotherly love, is,

Digitized by Google

is, the weakness and folly of too many among you of the lower sort, who are made the tools and instruments of your betters to work their designs, wherein you have no concern. Your numbers make you of use, and cunning men take the advantage, by putting words into your mouths which you do not understand; then they fix good or ill characters to those words, as it best serves their purposes: and thus you are taught to love or hate, you know not what or why; you often suspect your best friends, and nearest neighbours, even your teacher himself, without any reason, if your leaders once taught you to call him by a name which they tell you signifieth some very bad thing.

A third cause of our great want of brotherly love, seemeth to be, that this duty is not so often insisted on from the pulpit, as it ought to be in such times as these; on the contrary, it is to be doubted, whether doctrines are not sometimes delivered by an ungoverned zeal, a desire to be distinguished, or a view of interest, which produce quite different effects; when, upon occasions set apart to return thanks to God for some public blessing, the time is employed in stirring up one part of the congregation against the other, by representations of things and persons, which God, in his mercy, forgive those who are guilty of.

The last cause I shall mention of the want of brotherly love is, that unhappy disposition toward politicks among the trading people, which hath been industriously instilled into them. In former times, the middle and lower sort of mankind, seldom gained or lost by the factions of the kingdom, and therefore were little concerned in them, farther than as matter of talk and amusement: but now the meanest dealer will

Digitized by Google

will expect to turn the penny, by the merits of his party. He can represent his neighbour as a man of dangerous principles, can bring a railing accusation against him, perhaps a criminal one; and so rob him of his livelihood, and find his own account by that, much more than if he had disparaged his neighbour's goods, or defamed him as a cheat. For so it happens, that instead of inquiring into the skill or honesty of those kind of people, the manner is now to inquire into their party, and to reject or encourage them accordingly; which proceeding hath made our people, in general, such able politicians, that all the artifice, flattery, dissimulation, diligence, and dexterity in undermining each other, which the satyrical wit of men hath charged upon courts; together with all the rage and violence, cruelty and injustice, which have been ever imputed to publick assemblies; are with us (so polite are we grown) to be seen among our meanest traders and artificers, in the greatest perfection. All which, as it may be matter of some humiliation to the wise and mighty of this world, so the effects thereof may perhaps, in time, prove very different from what, I hope in charity, were ever foreseen or intended.

II. I will therefore now, in the second place, lay open some of the sad effects and consequences, which our animosities and mutual hatred have produced.

And the first ill consequence is, that our want of brotherly love hath almost driven out all sense of religion from among us, which cannot well be otherwise: for, since our Saviour laid so much weight upon his disciples loving one another, that he gave it among his last instructions; and since the primitive Christians

Digitized by Google

Christians are allowed to have chiefly propagated the faith by their strict observance of that instruction; it must follow, that in proportion as brotherly love declineth, Christianity will do so too. The little religion there is in the world, hath been observed to reside chiefly among the middle and lower sorts of people, who are neither tempted to pride or luxury by great riches, nor to desperate courses by extreme poverty: and truly I, upon that account, have thought it a happiness, that those who are under my immediate care, are generally of that condition; but where party hath once made entrance, with all its consequences of hatred, envy, partiality and virulence, religion cannot long keep its hold in any state or degree of life whatsoever. For, if the great men of the world have been censured in all ages for mingling too little religion with their politicks, what a havock of principles must they needs make in unlearned and irregular heads; of which indeed the effects are already too visible and melancholy all over the kingdom!

Another ill consequence from our want of brotherly love is, that it increaseth the insolence of the fanaticks; and this partly ariseth from a mistaken meaning of the word moderation; a word which hath been much abused, and bandied about for several years past. There are too many people indifferent enough to all religion; there are many others, who dislike the clergy, and would have them live in poverty and dependence: both these sorts are much commended by the fanaticks for moderate men, ready to put an end to our divisions, and to make a general union among protestants. Many ignorant well-meaning people are deceived by these appearances, strengthened

Digitized by Google

ened with great pretences to loyalty; and these occasions the fanaticks lay hold on, to revile the doctrine and discipline of the church, and even insult and oppress the clergy, wherever their number or favourers will bear them out; insomuch that one wilful refractory fanatick, hath been able to disturb a whole parish for many years together. But the most moderate and favoured divines dare not own that the word moderation, with respect to the dissenters, can be at all applied to their religion, but is purely personal or prudential. No good man repineth at the liberty of conscience they enjoy; and, perhaps, a very moderate divine may think better of their loyalty than others do; or, to speak after the manner of men, may think it necessary; that all protestants should be united against the common enemy; or out of discretion, or other reasons best known to himself, be tender of mentioning them at all. But still the errours of the dissenters are all fixed and determined, and must, upon demand, be acknowledged by all the divines of our church, whether they be called, in party phrase, high or low, moderate or violent. And farther, I believe it would be hard to find many moderate divines, who, if their opinion were asked whether dissenters should be trusted with power, could, according to their consciences, answer in the affirmative; from whence it is plain, that all the stir which the fanaticks have made with this word moderation, was only meant to increase our divisions, and widen them so far as to make room for themselves to get in between. And this is the only scheme they ever had (except that of destroying root and branch) for the uniting of protestants, they so much talk of.

I shall mention but one ill consequence more, which

Digitized by Google

which attends our want of brotherly love; that it hath put an end to all hospitality and friendship, all good correspondence and commerce between mankind. There are indeed such things as leagues and confederacies among those of the same party; but surely God never intended that men should be so limited in the choice of their friends: however, so it is in town and country, in every parish and street; the pastor is divided from his flock, the father from his son, and the house often divided against itself. Men's very natures are soured, and their passions inflamed, when they meet in party clubs, and spend their time in nothing else but railing at the opposite side: thus every man alive among us is encompassed with a million of enemies of his own country, among which his oldest acquaintance and friends, and kindred themselves, are often of the number: neither can people of different parties mix together without constraint, suspicion, or jealousy, watching every word they speak for fear of giving offence; or else falling into rudeness and reproaches, and so leaving themselves open to the malice and corruption of informers, who were never more numerous or expert in their trade. And as a farther addition to this evil, those very few, who, by the goodness and generosity of their nature, do in their own hearts despise this narrow principle of confining their friendship and esteem, their charity and good offices, to those of their own party, yet dare not discover their good inclinations, for fear of losing their favour and interest. And others again, whom God had formed with mild and gentle dispositions, think it necessary to put a force upon their own tempers, by acting a noisy, violent, malicious part, as a means to be distinguished.

Digitized by Google

tinguished. Thus hath party got the better of the very genius and constitution of our people; so that whoever reads the character of the English in former ages, will hardly believe their present posterity to be of the same nation or climate.

III. I shall now, in the last place, make use of some motives and exhortations, that may persuade you to embrace brotherly love, and to continue in it. Let me apply myself to you of the lower sort, and, desire you will consider, when any of you make use of fair and inticing words to draw in customers, whether you do it for their sakes or your own. And then, for whose sakes do you think it is, that your leaders are so industrious to put into your heads all that party rage and virulence? is it not to make you the tools and instruments, by which they work out their own designs? Has this spirit of faction been useful to any of you in your worldly concerns, except to those who have traded in whispering, backbiting, or informing, wanting skill or honesty to thrive by fairer methods? It is no business of yours to inquire, who is at the head of armies, or of councils, unless you had power and skill to choose, neither of which is ever likely to be your case; and therefore to fill your heads with fears, and hatred of persons and things, of which it is impossible you can ever make a right judgment, or to set you at variance with your neighbour, because his thoughts are not the same as yours, is not only in a very gross manner to cheat you of your time and quiet, but likewise to endanger your souls.

Secondly, In order to restore brotherly love, let me earnestly exhort you to stand firm in your religion; I mean the true religion hitherto established among

Digitized by Google

among us, without varying in the least either to popery on the one side, or to fanaticism on the other; and in a particular manner beware of that word, moderation; and believe it, that your neighbour is not immediately a villain, a papist, and a traitor, because the fanaticks and their adherents will not allow him to be a moderate man. Nay, it is very probable, that your teacher himself may be a loyal, pious, and able divine, without the least grain of moderation, as the word is too frequently understood. Therefore, to set you right in this matter, I will lay before you the character of a truly moderate man; and then I will give you the description of such a one, as falsely pretendeth to that title.

A man truly moderate, is steady in the doctrine and discipline of the church, but with a due Christian charity to all who dissent from it out of a principle of conscience; the freedom of which, he thinketh, ought to be fully allowed, as long as it is not abused, but never trusted with power. He is ready to defend with his life and fortune the protestant succession, and the protestant established faith, against all invaders whatsoever. He is for giving the crown its just prerogative, and the people their just liberties. He hateth no man for differing from him in political opinions; nor doth he think it a maxim infallible, that virtue should always attend upon favour, and vice upon disgrace. These are some few lineaments in the character of a truly moderate man: let us now compare it with the description of one who usually passeth under that title.

A moderate man, in the new meaning of the word, is one, to whom all religion is indifferent; who

Digitized by Google

who, although he denominates himself of the church, regardeth it no more than a conventicle. He perpetually raileth at the body of the clergy, with exceptions only to a very few, who, he hopeth, and probably upon false grounds, are as ready to betray their rights and properties as himself. He thinketh the power of the people can never be too great, nor that of the prince too little; and yet this very notion he publisheth as his best argument to prove him a most loyal subject. Every opinion in government, that differeth in the least from his, tendeth directly to popery, slavery, and rebellion. Whoever lieth under the frown of power, can, in his judgment, neither have common sense, common honesty, nor religion. Lastly, his devotion consisteth in drinking gibbets, confusion, and damnation; in profanely idolizing the memory of one dead prince, and ungratefully trampling upon the ashes of another.

By these marks you will easily distinguish a truly moderate man from those, who are commonly, but very falsely so called; and while persons thus qualified are so numerous and so noisy, so full of zeal and industry to gain proselytes, and spread their opinions among the people, it cannot be wondered at that there should be so little brotherly love left among us.

Lastly, it would probably contribute to restore some degree of brotherly love, if we would but consider, that the matter of those disputes, which inflame us to this degree, doth not, in its own nature, at all concern the generality of mankind. Indeed as to those, who have been great gainers or losers by the changes of the world, the case is different; and to preach moderation to the first, and patience to the last, would perhaps be to little purpose: but what is

Digitized by Google

that to the bulk of the people, who are not properly concerned in the quarrel, although evil instruments have drawn them into it? for, if the reasonable men on both sides were to confer opinions, they would find neither religion, loyalty, nor interest, are at all affected in this dispute. Not religion, because the members of the church, on both sides, profess to agree in every article: not loyalty to our prince, which is pretended to by one party as much as the other, and therefore can be no subject for debate: nor interest, for trade and industry lie open to all; and, what is farther, concerns only those who have expectations from the publick: so that the body of the people, if they knew their own good, might yet live amicably together, and leave their betters to quarrel among themselves; who might also probably soon come to a better temper, if they were less seconded and supported by the poor deluded multitude.

I have now done with my text, which I confess to have treated in a manner more suited to the present times, than to the nature of the subject in general. That I have not been more particular in explaining the several parts and properties of this great duty of brotherly love, the apostle to the Thessalonians will plead my excuse. "Touching brotherly love (saith "he) ye need not that I write unto you, for ye your-"selves are taught of God to love one another." So that nothing remains to add, but our prayers to God, that he would please to restore and continue his duty of brotherly love or charity among us, the very bond of peace and of all virtues.

Nov. 29, 1717.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

UPON THE

MARTYRDOM OF KING CHARLES I.

PREACHED AT ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN, JAN. 30, 1725-6, BEING SUNDAY.

GENESIS xlix. 5, 6, 7.

SIMEON *and* LEVI *are brethren; inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations.*

O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly mine honour be not thou united; for in their anger they ſlew a man, and in their ſelf-will they digged down a wall.

Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in JACOB, *and ſcatter them in* ISRAEL.

I KNOW very well, that the church hath been often cenſured for keeping holy this day of humiliation, in memory of that excellent king and bleſſed martyr CHARLES I, who rather choſe to die on a ſcaffold, than betray the religion and liberties of his people, wherewith God and the laws had entruſted him. But, at the ſame time, it is manifeſt that thoſe who make ſuch cenſures, are either people without any religion at all, or who derive their principles, and perhaps

Digitized by Google

their birth, from the abettors of those who contrived the murder of that prince, and have not yet shown the world that their opinions are changed. It is alleged, that the observation of this day hath served to continue and increase the animosity and enmity among our countrymen, and to disunite protestants; that a law was made, upon the restoration of the martyr's son, for a general pardon and oblivion, forbidding all reproaches upon that occasion; and since none are now alive who were actors or instruments in that tragedy, it is thought hard and uncharitable to keep up the memory of it for all generations.

Now, because I conceive most of you to be ignorant in many particulars concerning that horrid murder, and the rebellion which preceded it; I will,

First, relate to you so much of the story as may be sufficient for your information:

Secondly, I will tell you the consequences which this bloody deed had upon these kingdoms:

And, lastly, I will show you to what good uses this solemn day of humiliation may be applied.

As to the first; in the reign of this prince, Charles the martyr, the power and prerogative of the king were much greater than they are in our times, and so had been for at least seven hundred years before; and the best princes we ever had, carried their power much farther than the blessed martyr offered to do, in the most blameable part of his reign. But, the lands of the crown having been prodigally bestowed to favourites in the preceding reigns, the succeeding kings could not support themselves without taxes raised by parliament; which put them under a necessity of frequently calling those assemblies; and the crown lands being gotten into the hands of the nobility and

Digitized by Google

and gentry, beside the possessions of which the church had been robbed by king Henry the Eighth, power, which always follows property, grew to lean to the side of the people, by whom even the just rights of the crown were often disputed.

But farther: upon the cruel persecution raised against the protestants, under queen Mary, among great numbers who fled the kingdom to seek for shelter, several went and resided at Geneva, which is a commonwealth governed without a king, and where the religion contrived by Calvin, is without the order of bishops. When the protestant faith was restored by queen Elizabeth, those who fled to Geneva returned among the rest home to England, and were grown so fond of the government and religion of the place they had left, that they used all possible endeavours to introduce both into their own country; at the same time continually preaching and railing against ceremonies and distinct habits of the clergy; taxing whatever they disliked as a remnant of popery; and continued extremely troublesome to the church and state, under that great queen, as well as her successor king James I. These people called themselves puritans, as pretending to a purer faith than those of the church established. And these were the founders of our dissenters. They did not think it sufficient to leave all the errours of popery; but threw off many laudable and edifying institutions of the primitive church, and at last, even the government of bishops; which, having been ordained by the apostles themselves, had continued without interruption, in all Christian churches, for above fifteen hundred years. And all this they did, not because those things were evil, but because they were kept by the papists. From

Digitized by Google

thence they proceeded by degrees, to quarrel with the kingly government; because, as I have already said, the city of Geneva, to which their fathers had flown for refuge, was a commonwealth, or government of the people.

These puritans, about the middle of the martyr's reign, were grown to be a considerable faction in the kingdom, and in the lower house of parliament. They filled the publick with the most false and bitter libels against the bishops and the clergy, accusing chiefly the very best among them of popery; and at the same time, the house of commons grew so insolent and uneasy to the king, that they refused to furnish him with necessary supplies for the support of his family, unless upon such conditions as he could not submit to without forfeiting his conscience and honour, and even his coronation oath. And in such an extremity, he was forced upon a practice, no way justifiable, of raising money; for which, however, he had the opinion of the judges on his side; for wicked judges there were in those times as well as in ours. There were likewise many complaints, and sometimes justly made against the proceedings of a certain court, called the star-chamber, a judicature of great antiquity: but it had suffered some corruptions, for which, however, the king was nowise answerable. I cannot recollect any more subjects of complaint with the least ground of reason; nor is it needful to recollect them, because this gracious king did, upon the first application, redress all grievances by an act of parliament, and put it out of his power to do any hardships for the future. But that wicked faction in the house of commons, not content with all those marks of his justice and condescension, urged still for more; and joining

Digitized by Google

joining with a factious party from Scotland, who had the same fancies in religion, forced him to pass an act for cutting off the head of his best and chief minister; and at the same time, compelled him, by tumults and threatnings of a packed rabble, poisoned with the same doctrines, to pass another law, by which it should not be in his power to dissolve that parliament, without their own consent. Thus, by the greatest weakness and infatuation that ever possessed any man's spirit, this prince did in effect sign his own destruction. For the house of commons, having the reins in their own hands, drove on furiously; sent him every day some unreasonable demand; and when he refused to grant it, made use of their own power, and declared that an ordinance of both houses, without the king's consent, should be obeyed as a law, contrary to all reason and equity, as well as to the fundamental constitution of the kingdom.

About this time the rebellion in Ireland broke out, wherein his parliament refused to assist him; nor would accept his offer to come hither in person to subdue those rebels. These, and a thousand other barbarities, forced the king to summon his loyal subjects to his standard in his own defence. Meanwhile the English parliament, instead of helping the poor protestants here, seized on the very army that his majesty was sending over for our relief, and turned them against their own sovereign. The rebellion in England continued for four or five years: at last the king was forced to fly in disguise to the Scots, who sold him to the rebels. And these puritans had the impudent cruelty to try his sacred person in a mock court of justice, and cut off his head; which he might

Digitized by Google

have saved, if he would have yielded to betray the constitution in church and state.

In this whole proceeding, Simeon and Levi were brethren; the wicked insinuations of those fanatical preachers stirring up the cruelty of the soldiers, who, by force of arms, excluded from the house every member of parliament, whom they apprehended to bear the least inclination toward an agreement with the king, suffering only those to enter who thirsted chiefly for his blood; and this is the very account given by their own writers. Whence it is clear that this prince was, in all respects, a real martyr for the true religion and the liberty of the people. That odious parliament had first turned the bishops out of the house of lords; in a few years after, they murdered their king; then immediately abolished the whole house of lords; and so, at last, obtained their wishes, of having a government of the people, and a new religion, both after the manner of Geneva, without a king, a bishop, or a nobleman; and this they blasphemously called, "The kingdom of Christ and his "saints."

This is enough for your information on the first head: I shall therefore proceed to the second, wherein I will show you the miserable consequences, which that abominable rebellion and murder produced in these nations.

First, The Irish rebellion was wholly owing to that wicked English parliament. For the leaders in the Irish popish massacre would never have dared to stir a finger, if they had not been encouraged by that rebellious spirit in the English house of commons, which they very well knew must disable the king from

Digitized by Google

from sending any supplies to his protestant subjects here; and therefore, we may truly say that the English parliament held the king's hands, while the Irish papists here were cutting our grandfathers throats.

Secondly, That murderous puritan parliament, when they had all in their own power, could not agree upon any one method of settling a form either of religion or civil government; but changed every day from schism to schism, from heresy to heresy, and from one faction to another: Whence arose that wild confusion still continuing in our several ways of serving God, and those absurd notions of civil power, which have so often torn us with factions, more than any other nation in Europe.

Thirdly, To this rebellion and murder have been owing the rise and progress of atheism among us. For men, observing what numberless villanies of all kinds were committed during twenty years, under pretence of zeal and the reformation of God's church, were easily tempted to doubt that all religion was a mere imposture: and the same spirit of infidelity, so far spread among us at this present, is nothing but the fruit of the seeds sown by those rebellious hypocritical saints.

Fourthly, The old virtue, and loyalty, and generous spirit of the English nation were wholly corrupted, by the power, the doctrine, and the example, of those wicked people. Many of the ancient nobility were killed, and their families extinct, in defence of their prince and country, or murdered by the merciless courts of justice. Some of the worst among them favoured or complied with the reigning iniquities; and not a few of the new set, created when the mar-

Digitized by Google

martyr's son was restored, were such who had drunk too deep of the bad principles then prevailing.

Fifthly, The children of the murdered prince were forced to fly, for the safety of their lives, to foreign countries; where one of them at least, I mean king James II, was seduced to popery; which ended in the loss of his kingdoms, the misery and desolation of this country, and a long and expensive war abroad. Our deliverance was owing to the valour and conduct of the late king; and therefore, we ought to remember him with gratitude, but not mingled with blasphemy or idolatry. It was happy that his interests and ours were the same: and God gave him greater success than our sins deserved. But, as a house thrown down by a storm, is seldom rebuilt without some change in the foundation; so it hath happened, that since the late revolution, men have sate much looser in the true fundamentals both of religion and government, and factions have been more violent, treacherous, and malicious than ever; men running naturally from one extreme into another; and for private ends, taking up those very opinions professed by the leaders in that rebellion, which carried the blessed martyr to the scaffold.

Sixthly, Another consequence of this horrid rebellion and murder was, the destroying or defacing of such vast number of God's houses. "In their self-"will they digged down a wall." If a stranger should now travel in England, and observe the churches in his way, he could not otherwise conclude, than that some vast army of Turks or heathens had been sent on purpose to ruin and blot out all marks of christianity. They spared neither the statues of saints, nor ancient prelates, nor kings, nor benefactors; broke down the tombs

Digitized by Google

tombs and monuments of men famous in their generations, seized the vessels of silver set apart for the holiest use, tore down the most innocent ornaments both within and without, made the houses of prayer, dens of thieves, or stables for cattle. These were the mildest effects of puritan zeal and devotion for Christ; and this was what themselves affected to call a thorough reformation. In this kingdom, those ravages were not so easily seen; for, the people here being too poor to raise such noble temples, the mean ones we had were not defaced, but totally destroyed.

Upon the whole, it is certain, that although God might have found out many other ways to have punished a sinful people, without permitting this rebellion and murder; yet, as the course of the world hath run ever since, we need seek for no other causes of all the publick evils we have hitherto suffered, or may suffer for the future, by the misconduct of princes, or wickedness of the people.

I go on now, upon the third head, to show you to what good uses this solemn-day of humiliation may be applied.

First, it may be an instruction to princes themselves, to be careful in the choice of those who are their advisers in matters of law. All the judges of England, except one or two, advised the king, that he might legally raise money upon the subjects for building of ships, without consent of parliament; which, as it was the greatest oversight of his reign, so it proved the principal foundation of all his misfortunes. Princes may likewise learn from hence, not to sacrifice a faithful servant to the rage of a faction; nor to trust any body of men with a greater share of power than the laws of the land have appointed them, much

Digitized by Google

much less to deposit it in their hands until they shall please to restore it.

Secondly, By bringing to mind the tragedy of this day, and the consequences that have arisen from it, we shall be convinced how necessary it is for those in power to curb in season all such unruly spirits as desire to introduce new doctrines and discipline in the church, or new forms of government in the state. Those wicked puritans began, in queen Elizabeth's time, to quarrel only with surplices and other habits, with the ring in matrimony, the cross in baptism, and the like; thence they went on to farther matters of higher importance; and at last, they must needs have the whole government of the church dissolved. This great work they compassed, first, by depriving the bishops of their seats in parliament: then they abolished the whole order; and at last, which was their original design, they seized on all the church lands, and divided the spoil among themselves, and, like Jeroboam, made priests of the very dregs of the people. This was their way of reforming the church. As to the civil government, you have already heard how they modelled it, upon the murder of their king, and discarding the nobility. Yet, clearly to show what a Babel they had built, after twelve years trial and twenty several sorts of government, the nation, grown weary of their tyranny, was forced to call in the son of him whom those reformers had sacrificed. And thus were Simeon and Levi divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel.

Thirdly, Although the successors of these puritans, I mean our present dissenters, do not think fit to observe this day of humiliation; yet it would be very proper in them, upon some occasions, to renounce, in

Digitized by Google

in a publick manner, those principles upon which their predecessors acted; and it will be more prudent in them to do so, because those very puritans, of whom ours are followers, found, by experience, that after they had overturned the church and state, murdered their king, and were projecting what they called a kingdom of the saints, they were cheated of the power and possessions they only panted after, by an upstart sect of religion that grew out of their own bowels, who subjected them to one tyrant, while they were endeavouring to set up a thousand.

Fourthly, those who profess to be followers of our church established, and yet presume in discourse to justify or excuse that rebellion and murder of the king, ought to consider how utterly contrary all such opinions are to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, as well as to the articles of our church, and to the preaching and practice of its true professors for above a hundred years. Of late times indeed, and I speak it with grief of heart, we have heard even sermons of a strange nature: although reason would make one think it a very unaccountable way of procuring favour under a monarchy, by palliating and lessening the guilt of those who murdered the best of kings in cold blood, and, for a time, destroyed the very monarchy itself. Pray God, we may never more hear such doctrine from the pulpit, nor have it scattered about in print, to poison the people!

Fifthly, Some general knowledge of this horrid rebellion and murder, with the consequences they had upon the nations, may be a warning to our people, not to believe a lie, and to mistrust those deluding spirits, who, under pretence of a purer and more reformed religion, would lead them from their duty

to

Digitized by Google

to God and the laws. Politicians may say what they please; but it is no hard thing at all for the meanest person, who hath common understanding, to know whether he be well or ill governed. If he be freely allowed to follow his trade and calling; if he be secure in his property, and hath the benefit of the law to defend himself against injustice and oppression; if his religion be different from that of his country, and the government think fit to tolerate it; (which he may be very secure of, let it be what it will) he ought to be fully satisfied, and give no offence, by writing or discourse, to the worship established, as the dissenting preachers are too apt to do. But, if he hath any new visions of his own, it is his duty to be quiet, and possess them in silence, without disturbing the community by a furious zeal for making proselytes. This was the folly and madness of those ancient puritan fanaticks: they must needs overturn Heaven and earth, violate all the laws of God and man, make their country a field of blood, to propagate whatever wild or wicked opinions came into their heads, declaring all their absurdities and blasphemies to proceed from the Holy Ghost.

To conclude this head. In answer to that objection of keeping up animosity and hatred between protestants, by the observation of this day; if there be any sect, or sort of people among us, who profess the same principles in religion and government which those puritan rebels put in practice, I think it is the interest of all those who love the church and king, to keep up as strong a party against them as possible, until they shall, in a body, renounce all those wicked opinions upon which their predecessors acted, to the disgrace

Digitized by Google

disgrace of christianity, and the perpetual infamy of the English nation.

When we accuse the papists of the horrid doctrine, "that no faith ought to be kept with hereticks;" they deny it to a man: and yet we justly think it dangerous to trust them, because we know their actions have been sometimes suitable to that opinion. But the followers of those who beheaded the martyr, have not yet renounced their principles; and till they do, they may be justly suspected; neither will the bare name of protestants set them right: for, surely, Christ requires more from us than a profession of hating popery, which a Turk or an atheist may do as well as a protestant.

If an enslaved people should recover their liberty, from a tyrannical power of any sort, who could blame them for commemorating their deliverance by a day of joy and thanksgiving? And doth not the destruction of a church, a king, and three kingdoms, by the artifices, hypocrisy, and cruelty, of a wicked race of soldiers and preachers, and other sons of Belial, equally require a solemn time of humiliation; especially since the consequences of that bloody scene still continue, as I have already shown, in their effects upon us?

Thus I have done with the three heads I proposed to discourse on. But, before I conclude, I must give a caution to those who hear me, that they may not think I am pleading for absolute unlimited power in any one man. It is true, all power is from God: and, as the apostle says, "The powers that be are "ordained of God:" but this is in the same sense that all we have is from God, our food and raiment, and whatever possession we hold by lawful means. Nothing can be meant in those or any other words of Scripture,

Digitized by Google

Scripture, to justify tyrannical power, or the savage cruelties of those heathen emperors who lived in the time of the apostles. And so St. Paul concludes, "The powers that be are ordained of God:" for what? why, "for the punishment of evil doers, and "the praise, the reward of them that do well." There is no more inward value in the greatest emperor, than in the meanest of his subjects: his body is composed of the same substance, the same parts, and with the same or greater infirmities: his education is generally worse, by flattery, and idleness, and luxury, and those evil dispositions that early power is apt to give. It is therefore against common sense, that his private personal interest, or pleasure, should be put in the balance with the safety of millions; every one of which is equal by nature, equal in the sight of God, equally capable of salvation: and it is for their sakes, not his own, that he is entrusted with the government over them. He hath as high trust as can safely be reposed in one man, and if he discharge it as he ought, he deserves all the honour and duty that a mortal may be allowed to receive. His personal failings we have nothing to do with; and errours in government are to be imputed to his ministers in the state. To what height those errours may be suffered to proceed, is not the business of this day, or this place, or of my function, to determine. When oppressions grow too great and universal to be born, nature or necessity may find a remedy. But, if a private person reasonably expects pardon, upon his amendment, for all faults that are not capital; it would be a hard condition indeed, not to give the same allowance to a prince; who must see with other men's eyes, and hear with other men's ears, which are often wilfully blind and deaf.

Digitized by Google

deaf. Such was the condition of the martyr; and is so, in some degree, of all other princes. Yet, this we may justly say in defence of the common people in all civilized nations, that it must be a very bad government indeed, where the body of the subjects will not rather choose to live in peace and obedience, than take up arms on pretence of faults in the administration, unless where the vulgar are deluded by false preachers to grow fond of new visions and fancies in religion; which, managed by dextrous men, for sinister ends of malice, envy, or ambition, have often made whole nations run mad. This was exactly the case in the whole progress of that great rebellion, and the murder of king Charles I. But the late revolution under the prince of Orange, was occasioned by a proceeding directly contrary, the oppression and injustice there beginning from the throne: for that unhappy prince, king James II, did not only invade our laws and liberties, but would have forced a false religion upon his subjects, for which he was deservedly rejected, since there could be no other remedy found, or at least agreed on. But, under the blessed martyr, the deluded people would have forced many false religions, not only on their fellow-subjects, but even upon their sovereign himself, and at the same time invaded all his undoubted rights; and because he would not comply, raised a horrid rebellion, wherein, by the permission of God, they prevailed, and put their sovereign to death, like a common criminal, in the face of the world.

Therefore, those who seem to think they cannot otherwise justify the late revolution, and the change of the succession, than by lessening the guilt of the puritans, do certainly put the greatest affront imagin-

Digitized by Google

able upon the present powers, by supposing any relation or resemblance between that rebellion and the late revolution; and, consequently, that the present establishment is to be defended by the same arguments which those usurpers made use of, who, to obtain their tyranny, trampled under foot all the laws both of God and man.

One great design of my discourse was, to give you warning against running into either extreme of two bad opinions, with relation to obedience. As kings are called gods upon earth; so some would allow them an equal power with God, over all laws and ordinances; and that the liberty, and property, and life, and religion of the subject, depended wholly upon the breath of the prince; which however, I hope, was never meant by those who pleaded for passive obedience. And this opinion hath not been confined to that party which was first charged with it; but hath some times gone over to the other, to serve many an evil turn of interest or ambition; who have been as ready to enlarge prerogative, where they could find their own account, as the highest maintainers of it.

On the other side, some look upon kings as answerable for every mistake or omission in government, and bound to comply with the most unreasonable demands of an unquiet faction; which was the case of those who persecuted the blessed martyr of this day from his throne to the scaffold.

Between these two extremes, it is easy, from what hath been said, to choose a middle: to be good and loyal subjects; yet, according to your power, faithful assertors of your religion and liberties: to avoid

Digitized by Google

avoid all broachers and preachers of newfangled doctrines in the church: to be strict observers of the laws, which cannot be justly taken from you without your own consent: in short, "to obey God and the "king, and meddle not with those who are given "to change."

Which that you may all do, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

FALSE WITNESS.

EXODUS XX, 16.

Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.

IN those great changes that are made in a country, by the prevailing of one party over another, it is very convenient that the prince, and those who are in authority under him, should use all just and proper methods for preventing any mischief to the publick from seditious men. And governors do well, when they encourage any good subject to discover (as his duty obligeth him) whatever plots or conspiracies may be any way dangerous to the state: neither are they to be blamed, even when they receive informations from bad men, in order to find out the truth, when it concerns the public welfare. Every one indeed is naturally inclined to have an ill opinion of an informer; although it is not impossible but an honest man may be called by that name. For whoever knoweth any thing, the telling of which would prevent some great evil to his prince, his country, or his neighbour, is bound in conscience to reveal it. But the mischief is, that when parties are violently inflamed, which seemeth unfor-

Digitized by Google

unfortunately to be our case at present, there is never wanting a set of evil instruments, who, either out of mad zeal, private hatred, or filthy lucre, are always ready to offer their service to the prevailing side, and become accusers of their brethren, without any regard to truth or charity. Holy David numbers this among the chief of his sufferings; "False witnesses are risen "up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty *." Our Saviour and his apostles did likewise undergo the same distress, as we read both in the Gospels and the Acts.

Now because the sin of false witnessing is so horrible and dangerous in itself, and so odious to God and man; and because the bitterness of too many among us is risen to such a height, that it is not easy to know where it will stop, or how far some weak and wicked minds may be carried by a mistaken zeal, a malicious temper, or hope of reward, to break this great commandment delivered in the text: therefore, in order to prevent this evil, and the consequences of it, at least among you who are my hearers, I shall,

I. First, Show you several ways by which a man may be called a false witness against his neighbour.

II. Secondly, I shall give you some rules for your conduct and behaviour, in order to defend yourselves against the malice and cunning of false accusers.

III. And lastly, I shall conclude with showing you very briefly, how far it is your duty, as good subjects and good neighbours, to bear faithful witness,

* Psalm xxvii, 12.

Digitized by Google

when you are lawfully called to it by those in authority, or by the sincere advice of your own consciences.

I. As to the first, there are several ways by which a man may be justly called a false witness against his neighbour.

First, According to the direct meaning of the word, when a man accuseth his neighbour without the least ground of truth. So we read, "that Jezabel hired "two sons of Belial to accuse Naboth for blaspheming "God and the king, for which, although he was "entirely innocent, he was stoned to death." And in our age it is not easy to tell how many men have lost their lives, been ruined in their fortunes, and put to ignominious punishment, by the downright perjury of false witnesses! the law itself in such cases being not able to protect the innocent. But this is so horrible a crime, that it doth not need to be aggravated by words.

A second way by which a man becometh a false witness is, when he mixeth falsehood and truth together, or concealeth some circumstances, which, if they were told, would destroy the falsehoods he uttereth. So the two false witnesses who accused our Saviour before the chief priests, by a very little perverting of his words, would have made him guilty of a capital crime; for so it was among the Jews to prophesy any evil against the temple: This fellow said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God, and "to build it in three days;" whereas the words, as our Saviour spoke them, were to another end, and differently expressed: for when the Jews asked him to show them a sign, he said; "Destroy this temple, and

Digitized by Google

" and in three days I will raise it up." In such cases as these, an innocent man is half confounded, and looketh as if he were guilty, since he neither can deny his words, nor perhaps readily strip them from the malicious additions of a false witness.

Thirdly, A man is a false witness, when, in accusing his neighbour, he endeavours to aggravate by his gestures, and tone of his voice, or when he chargeth a man with words which were only repeated or quoted from somebody else. As if any one should tell me that he heard another speak certain dangerous and seditious speeches, and I should immediately accuse him for speaking them himself; and so drop the only circumstance that made him innocent. This was the case of St. Stephen. The false witnesses said, "This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words " against this holy place and the law." Whereas St. Stephen said no such words; but only repeated some prophesies of Jeremiah or Malachi, which threatened Jerusalem with destruction if it did not repent: however, by the fury of the people, this innocent holy person was stoned to death for words he never spoke.

Fourthly, The blackest kind of false witnesses are those, who do the office of the devil, by tempting their brethren in order to betray them. I cannot call to mind any instances of this kind mentioned in holy scripture. But I am afraid, this vile practice hath been too much followed in the world. When a man's temper hath been so soured by misfortunes and hard usage, that perhaps he hath reason enough to complain; then one of these seducers, under the pretence of friendship, will seem to lament his case, urge the hardships he hath suffered, and endeavour to raise his passions, until he hath said something that a malicious

Digitized by Google

informer can pervert or aggravate against him in a court of justice.

Fifthly, Whoever beareth witness against his neighbour, out of a principle of malice and revenge, from any old grudge, or hatred to his person; such a man is a false witness in the sight of God, although what he says be true; because the motive or cause is evil, not to serve his prince or country, but to gratify his own resentments. And therefore, although a man thus accused may be very justly punished by the law, yet this doth by no means acquit the accuser; who, instead of regarding the publick service, intended only to glut his private rage and spite.

Sixthly, I number among false witnesses, all those who make a trade of being informers in hope of favour and reward; and to this end employ their time, either by listening in publick places, to catch up an accidental word; or in corrupting men's servants to discover any unwary expression of their master; or thrusting themselves into company, and then using the most indecent scurrilous language; fastening a thousand falsehoods and scandals upon a whole party, on purpose to provoke such an answer as they may turn to an accusation. And truly this ungodly race is said to be grown so numerous, that men of different parties can hardly converse together with any security. Even the pulpit hath not been free from the misrepresentation of these informers; of whom the clergy have not wanted occasions to complain with holy David: "They daily mistake my words, all they "imagine is to do me evil." Nor is it any wonder at all, that this trade of informing should be now in a flourishing condition, since our case is manifestly thus:

Digitized by Google

thus: We are divided into two parties, with very little charity or temper toward each other: The prevailing side may talk of past things as they please, with security; and generally do it in the most provoking words they can invent; while those who are down, are sometimes tempted to speak in favour of a lost cause, and therefore, without great caution, must needs be often caught tripping, and thereby furnish plenty of materials for witnesses and informers.

Lastly, Those may well be reckoned among false witnesses against their neighbour, who bring him into trouble and punishment by such accusations as are of no consequence at all to the publick, nor can be of any other use but to create vexation. Such witnesses are those who cannot hear an idle intemperate expression, but they must immediately run to the magistrate to inform; or perhaps wrangling in their cups over night, when they were not able to speak or apprehend three words of commen sense, will pretend to remember every thing in the morning, and think themselves very properly qualified to be accusers of their brethren. God be thanked, the throne of our king is too firmly settled to be shaken by the folly and rashness of every sottish companion. And I do not in the least doubt, that when those in power begin to observe the falsehood, the prevarication, the aggravating manner, the treachery and seducing, the malice and revenge, the love of lucre, and lastly the trifling accusations in too many wicked people; they will be as ready to discourage every sort of those whom I have numbered among false witnesses, as they will be to countenance honest men, who, out of a true zeal to their prince and country, do, in the innocence of their hearts, freely discover whatever they may

Digitized by Google

may apprehend to be dangerous to either. A good Christian will think it sufficient to reprove his brother for a rash unguarded word, where there is neither danger nor evil example to be apprehended; or, if he will not amend by reproof, avoid his conversation.

II. And thus much may serve to show the several ways whereby a man may be said to be a false witness against his neighbour. I might have added one kind more, and it is of those who inform against their neighbour out of fear of punishment to themselves; which, although it be more excusable, and hath less of malice than any of the rest, cannot however be justified. I go on therefore upon the second head, to give you some rules for your conduct and behaviour, in order to defend yourselves against the malice and cunning of false accusers.

It is readily agreed, that innocence is the best protection in the world; yet that it is not always sufficient without some degree of prudence, our Saviour himself intimateth to us, by instructing his disciples "to be wise as serpents, as well as innocent "as doves." But, if ever innocence be too weak a defence, it is chiefly so in jealous and suspicious times, when factions are arrived to a high pitch of animosity, and the minds of men, instead of being warmed by a true zeal for religion, are inflamed only by party fury. Neither is virtue itself a sufficient security in such times, because it is not allowed to be virtue, otherwise than as it hath a mixture of party.

However, although virtue and innocence are no infallible defence against perjury, malice, and subornation, yet they are great supports for enabling us to bear those evils with temper and resignation; and it is

Digitized by Google

is an unspeakable comfort to a good man, under the malignity of evil mercenary tongues, that a few years will carry his appeal to a higher tribunal, where false witnesses, instead of daring to bring accusations before an all-seeing Judge, will call for mountains to cover them. As for earthly judges, they seldom have it in their power, and God knows whether they have it in their will, to mingle mercy with justice; they are so far from knowing the hearts of the accuser or the accused, that they cannot know their own; and their understanding is frequently biassed, although their intentions be just. They are often prejudiced to causes, parties, and persons, through the infirmity of human nature, without being sensible themselves that they are so: And therefore, although God may pardon their errours here, he certainly will not ratify their sentences hereafter.

However, since, as we have before observed, our Saviour prescribeth to us to be not only harmless as doves, but wise as serpents; give me leave to prescribe to you some rules, which the most ignorant person may follow for the conduct of his life, with safety, in perilous times, against false accusers.

1st, Let me advise you to have nothing at all to do with that which is commonly called politicks, or the government of the world, in the nature of which it is certain you are utterly ignorant; and when your opinion is wrong, although it proceeds from ignorance, it shall be an accusation against you. Besides, opinions in government are right or wrong just according to the humour and disposition of the times; and unless you have judgment to distinguish, you may be punished at one time, for what you would be rewarded in another.

2dly,

Digitized by Google

2dly, Be ready at all times, in your words and actions, to show your loyalty to the king that reigns over you. This is the plain manifest doctrine of holy scripture: "Submit yourselves to every ordi-"nance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to "the king as supreme, &c." And another apostle telleth us, "The powers that be are ordained of "God." Kings are the ordinances of man by the permission of God, and they are ordained of God by his instrument man. The powers that be, the present powers, which are ordained by God, and yet in some sense are the ordinances of man, are what you must obey, without presuming to examine into rights and titles; neither can it be reasonably expected, that the powers in being, or in possession, should suffer their title to be publickly disputed by subjects without severe punishment. And to say the truth, there is no duty in religion more easy to the generality of mankind, than obedience to government: I say, to the generality of mankind: because while their law, and property, and religion are preserved, it is of no great consequence to them by whom they are governed, and therefore they are under no temptation to desire a change.

3dly, In order to prevent any change from the malice of false witnesses, be sure to avoid intemperance. If it be often so hard for men to govern their tongues when they are in their right senses, how can they hope to do it when they are heated with drink? In those cases most men regard not what they say, and too many not what they swear; neither will a man's memory disordered with drunkenness serve to defend himself, or satisfy him whether he were guilty or not.

4thly,

Digitized by Google

4thly, Avoid, as much as possible, the conversation of those people who are given to talk of publick persons and affairs, especially of those whose opinions in such matters are different from yours. I never once knew any disputes of this kind managed with tolerable temper; but on both sides they only agree as much as possible to provoke the passions of each other: indeed with this disadvantage, that he who argueth on the side of power, may speak securely the utmost his malice can invent; while the other lieth every moment at the mercy of an informer; and the law, in these cases, will give no allowance at all for passion, inadvertency, or the highest provocation.

III. I come now, in the last place, to show you how far it is your duty, as good subjects and good neighbours, to bear faithful witness, when you are lawfully called to it by those in authority, or by the sincere advice of your own consciences.

In what I have hitherto said, you easily find, that I do not talk of bearing witness in general, which is and may be lawful upon a thousand accounts, in relation to property and other matters, and wherein there are many scandalous corruptions, almost peculiar to this country, which would require to be handled by themselves. But I have confined my discourse only to that branch of bearing false witness whereby the publick is injured, in the safety or honour of the prince, or those in authority under him.

In order therefore to be a faithful witness, it is first necessary that a man doth not undertake it from the least prospect of any private advantage to himself. The smallest mixture of that leaven will sour the whole lump. Interest will infallibly bias his judgment, although

Digitized by Google

though he be ever so firmly resolved to say nothing but truth. He cannot serve God and Mammon: but as interest is the chief end, he will use the most effectual means to advance it. He will aggravate circumstances to make his testimony valuable; he will be sorry if the person he accuseth should be able to clear himself; in short, he is labouring a point which he thinks necessary to his own good; and it would be a disappointment to him, that his neighbour should prove innocent.

2dly, Every good subject is obliged to bear witness against his neighbour, for any action or words, the telling of which would be of advantage to the publick, and the concealment dangerous, or of ill example. Of this nature are all plots and conspiracies against the peace of a nation; all disgraceful words against a prince, such as clearly discover a disloyal and rebellious heart. But, where our prince and country can possibly receive no damage or disgrace; where no scandal or ill example is given; and our neighbour, it may be, provoked by us, happeneth privately to drop a rash or indiscreet word, which in strictness of law might bring him under trouble, perhaps to his utter undoing; there we are obliged, we ought to proceed no farther than warning and reproof.

In describing to you the several kinds of false witnesses, I have made it less necessary to dwell much longer upon this head: because a faithful witness, like every thing else, is known by his contrary: Therefore it would be only repetition of what I have already said, to tell you, that the strictest truth is required in a witness; that he should be wholly free from malice against the person he accuses; that he should

Digitized by Google

should not aggravate the smallest circumstance against the criminal, nor conceal the smallest in his favour; and to crown all, though I have hinted it before, that the only cause or motive of his undertaking an office, so subject to censure, and so difficult to perform, should be the safety and service of his prince and country.

Under these conditions and limitations (but not otherwise) there is no manner of doubt, but a good man may lawfully and justly become a witness in behalf of the publick, and may perform that office (in its own nature not very desirable) with honour and integrity. For the command in the text is positive, as well as negative; that is to say, as we are directed not to bear false witness against our neighbour, so we are to bear true. Next to the word of God, and the advice of teachers, every man's conscience, strictly examined, will be his best director in this weighty point; and to that I shall leave him.

It might perhaps be thought proper to have added something by way of advice to those who are unhappily engaged in this abominable trade and sin of bearing false witness; but I am far from believing or supposing any of that destructive tribe are now my hearers. I look upon them as a sort of people that seldom frequent these holy places, where they can hardly pick up any materials to serve their turn, unless they think it worth their while to misrepresent or pervert the words of the preacher: And whoever is that way disposed, I doubt, cannot be in a very good condition to edify and reform himself by what he heareth. God in his mercy preserve us from all the guilt of this grievous sin forbidden in my text, and from the snares of those who are guilty of it.

I shall

Digitized by Google

I shall conclude with one or two precepts given by Moses from God to the children of Israel, in the xxiii[d] of Exod. 1, 2.

" Thou shalt not raise a false report: Put not thine " hand with the wicked, to be an unrighteous witness.

" Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, " neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after " many, to wrest judgment."

Now to God the Father, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

THE POOR MAN'S CONTENTMENT.

PHILIPPIANS, iv, 11.

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

THE holy Scripture is full of expressions to set forth the miserable condition of man during the whole progress of his life; his weakness, pride, and vanity; his unmeasurable desires, and perpetual disappointments; the prevalency of his passions, and the corruptions of his reason; his deluding hopes, and his real, as well as imaginary fears; his natural and artificial wants; his cares and anxieties; the diseases of his body, and the diseases of his mind; the shortness of his life; his dread of a future state, with his carelessness to prepare for it: and the wise men of all ages have made the same reflections.

But all these are general calamities, from which none are excepted; and being without remedy, it is vain to bewail them. The great question, long debated in the world, is, whether the rich or the poor are the least miserable of the two? It is certain that no rich man ever desired to be poor, and that most,

Digitized by Google

if not all poor men, desire to be rich; whence it may be argued, that in all appearance, the advantage lieth on the side of wealth, because both parties agree in preferring it before poverty. But this reasoning will be found to be false: for I lay it down as a certain truth, that God Almighty hath placed all men upon an equal foot, with respect to their happiness in this world, and the capacity of attaining their salvation in the next; or, at least, if there be any difference, it is not to the advantage of the rich and the mighty. Now, since a great part of those who usually make up our congregations, are not of considerable station, and many among them, of the lower sort, and since the meaner people are generally and justly charged with the sin of repining and murmuring at their own condition, to which, however, their betters are sufficiently subject (although, perhaps, for shame, not always so loud in their complaints) I thought it might be useful to reason upon this point in as plain a manner as I can. I shall therefore show, first, that the poor enjoy many temporal blessings, which are not common to the rich and the great: and likewise, that the rich and the great are subject to many temporal evils, which are not common to the poor.

But here I would not be misunderstood; perhaps, there is not a word more abused than that of the poor, or wherein the world is more generally mistaken. Among the number of those who beg in our streets, or are half-starved at home, or languish in prison for debt, there is hardly one in a hundred, who doth not owe his misfortunes to his own laziness, or drunkenness, or worse vices.

To

Digitized by Google

To these he owes those very diseases, which often disable him from getting his bread. Such wretches are deservedly unhappy; they can only blame themselves; and when we are commanded to have pity on the poor, these are not understood to be of the number.

It is true indeed, that sometimes honest, endeavouring men, are reduced to extreme want, even to the begging of alms, by losses, by accidents, by diseases, and old age, without any fault of their own: but these are very few, in comparison of the other; nor would their support be any sensible burden to the publick, if the charity of well-disposed persons were not intercepted by those common strollers, who are most importunate, and who least deserve it. These, indeed, are properly and justly called the poor, whom it should be our study to find out and distinguish, by making them partake of our superfluity and abundance.

But neither have these any thing to do with my present subject: for, by the poor, I only intend the honest, industrious artificer, the meaner sort of tradesmen, and the labouring man, who getteth his bread by the sweat of his brows, in town or country, and who make the bulk of mankind among us.

First, I shall therefore show, that the poor (in the sense I understand the word) do enjoy many temporal blessings, which are not common to the rich and great; and likewise, that the rich and great are subject to many temporal evils, which are not common to the poor.

Secondly, From the arguments offered to prove the foregoing head, I shall draw some observations that may be useful for your practice.

Digitized by Google

1. As to the first: Health, we know, is generally allowed to be the best of all earthly possessions, because it is that, without which, we can have no satisfaction in any of the rest. For riches are of no use, if sickness taketh from us the ability of enjoying them, and power and greatness are then only a burden. Now, if we would look for health, it must be in the humble habitation of the labouring man, or industrious artificer, who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, and usually live to a good old age, with a great degree of strength and vigour.

The refreshment of the body by sleep, is another great happiness of the meaner sort. Their rest is not disturbed by the fear of thieves and robbers, nor is it interrupted by surfeits of intemperance. Labour and plain food supply the want of quieting draughts; and the wise man telleth us, that the sleep of the labouring man is sweet. As to children, which are certainly accounted of as a blessing, even to the poor, where industry is not wanting; they are an assistance to their honest parents, instead of being a burden; they are healthy and strong, and fit for labour; neither is the father in fear, lest his heir should be ruined by an unequal match; nor is he solicitous about his rising in the world, farther than to be able to get his bread.

The poorer sort are not the objects of general hatred or envy; they have no twinges of ambition, nor trouble themselves with party quarrels, or state divisions. The idle rabble, who follow their ambitious leaders in such cases, do not fall within my description of the poorer sort; for, it is plain, I mean only the honest industrious poor in town or country, who are safest in times of public disturbance, in perilous seasons, and public revolutions, if they will be quiet,

Digitized by Google

quiet, and do their own business: for artificers and husbandmen are necessary in all governments: but, in such seasons, the rich are the publick mark, because they are oftentimes of no use but to be plundered; like some sort of birds, who are good for nothing but their feathers; and so fall a prey to the strongest side.

Let us proceed, on the other side, to examine the disadvantages that the rich and the great lie under, with respect to the happiness of the present life.

First then; While health, as we have said, is the general portion of the lower sort, the gout, the dropsy, the stone, the colick, and all other diseases, are continually haunting the palaces of the rich and the great, as the natural attendants upon laziness and luxury. Neither does the rich man eat his sumptuous fare with half the appetite and relish, that even the beggars do the crumbs which fall from his table: but, on the contrary, he is full of loathing and disgust, or at best of indifference, in the midst of plenty. Thus their intemperance shortens their lives, without pleasing their appetites.

Business, fear, guilt, design, anguish, and vexation, are continually buzzing about the curtains of the rich and the powerful, and will hardly suffer them to close their eyes, unless when they are dozed with the fumes of strong liquors.

It is a great mistake to imagine, that the rich want but few things; their wants are more numerous, more craving, and urgent, than those of poorer men: for these endeavour only at the necessaries of life, which make them happy, and they think no farther: but the desire of power and wealth is endless, and therefore impossible to be satisfied with any acquisitions.

Digitized by Google

If riches were so great a blessing as they are commonly thought, they would at least have this advantage, to give their owners cheerful hearts and countenances; they would often stir them up to express their thankfulness to God, and discover their satisfaction to the world. But, in fact, the contrary to all this is true. For, where are there more cloudy brows, more melancholy hearts, or more ingratitude to their great Benefactor, than among those who abound in wealth? And indeed, it is natural that it should be so, because those men, who covet things that are hard to be got, must be hard to please; whereas a small thing maketh a poor man happy; and great losses cannot befal him.

It is likewise worth considering, how few among the rich have procured their wealth by just measures; how many owe their fortunes to the sins of their parents, how many more to their own? If men's titles were to be tried before a true court of conscience, where false swearing, and a thousand vile artifices (that are well known, and can hardly be avoided in human courts of justice) would avail nothing; how many would be ejected with infamy and disgrace? How many grow considerable by breach of trust, by bribery and corruption? how many have sold their religion, with the rights and liberties of themselves and others, for power and employments?

And it is a mistake to think, that the most hardened sinner, who oweth his possessions or titles to any such wicked arts of thieving, can have true peace of mind, under the reproaches of a guilty conscience, and amid the cries of ruined widows and orphans.

I know not one real advantage that the rich have over

Digitized by Google

over the poor, except the power of doing good to others; but this is an advantage which God hath not given wicked men the grace to make use of. The wealth acquired by evil means, was never employed to good ends; for that would be to divide the kingdom of Satan against itself. Whatever hath been gained by fraud, avarice, oppression, and the like, must be preserved and increased by the same methods.

I shall add but one thing more upon this head, which I hope will convince you, that God (whose thoughts are not as our thoughts) never intended riches or power to be necessary for the happiness of mankind in this life; because it is certain, that there is not one single good quality of the mind absolutely necessary to obtain them, where men are resolved to be rich at any rate; neither honour, justice, temperance, wisdom, religion, truth, nor learning: for, a slight acquaintance of the world will inform us, that there have been many instances of men in all ages, who have arrived at great possessions and great dignities, by cunning, fraud, or flattery, without any of these, or any other virtues that can be named. Now, if riches and greatness were such blessings, that good men without them could not have their share of happiness in this life; how cometh it to pass, that God should suffer them to be often dealt to the worst, and most profligate of mankind; that they should be generally procured by the most abominable means, and applied to the basest and most wicked uses? This ought not to be conceived of a just, a merciful, a wise, and almighty Being. We must therefore conclude, that wealth and power are in their own nature, at best, but things indifferent, and that a good man

Digitized by Google

may be equally happy without them; provided that he hath a sufficiency of the common blessings of human life to answer all the reasonable and virtuous demands of nature, which his industry will provide, and sobriety will prevent his wanting. Agur's prayer, with the reasons of his wish, are full to this purpose: "Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with "food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny "thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, "and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

From what hath been said, I shall, in the second place, offer some considerations, that may be useful for your practice.

And here I shall apply myself chiefly to those of the lower sort, for whose comfort and satisfaction this discourse is principally intended. For, having observed the great sin of those who do not abound in wealth, to be that of murmuring and repining, that God hath dealt his blessings unequally to the sons of men, I thought it would be of great use to remove out of your minds so false and wicked an opinion, by showing that your condition is really happier than most of you imagine.

First, therefore, it hath been always agreed in the world, that the present happiness of mankind consisted in the ease of our body, and the quiet of our mind; but, from what hath been already said, it plainly appears, that neither wealth nor power do in any sort contribute to either of these two blessings. If, on the contrary, by multiplying our desires, they increase our discontents; if they destroy our health, gall us with painful diseases, and shorten our life: if they expose us to hatred, to envy, to censure, to a thousand temptations, it is not easy to see why a wise man

Digitized by Google

man should make them his choice, for their own sake, although it were in his power. Would any of you, who are in health and strength of body, with moderate food and raiment earned by your own labour, rather choose to be in the rich man's bed, under the torture of the gout, unable to take your natural rest, or natural nourishment, with the additional load of a guilty conscience, reproaching you for injustice, oppressions, covetousness, and fraud? No; but you would take the riches and power, and leave behind the inconveniencies that attend them; and so would every man living. But that is more than our share, and God never intended this world for such a place of rest as we would make it; for the Scripture assureth us that it was only designed as a place of trial. Nothing is more frequent than a man to wish himself in another's condition; yet he seldom doth it without some reserve: he would not be so old; he would not be so sickly: he would not be so cruel; he would not be so insolent; he would not be so vicious; he would not be so oppressive; so griping; and so on. Whence it is plain, that in their own judgment, men are not so unequally dealt with as they would at first sight imagine: for, if I would not change my condition with another man, without any exception or reservation at all, I am in reality more happy than he.

Secondly, you of the meaner sort are subject to fewer temptations than the rich; and therefore your vices are more unpardonable. Labour subdueth your appetites to be satisfied with common things; the business of your several callings filleth up your whole time; so that idleness, which is the bane and destruction of virtue, doth not lead you into the neighbourhood

Digitized by Google

bourhood of sin: your passions are cooler, by not being inflamed with excess, and therefore the gate and the way that lead to life, are not so strait or so narrow to you, as to those who live among all the allurements to wickedness. To serve God with the best of your care and understanding, and to be just and true in your dealings, is the short sum of your duty, and will be the more strictly required of you, because nothing lieth in the way to divert you from it.

Thirdly, It is plain from what I have said, that you of the lower rank have no just reason to complain of your condition: because, as you plainly see, it affordeth you so many advantages, and freeth you from so many vexations, so many distempers both of body and mind, which pursue and torment the rich and powerful.

Fourthly, you are to remember and apply, that the poorest person is not excused from doing good to others, and even relieving the wants of his distressed neighbour, according to his abilities; and if you perform your duty in this point, you far outdo the greatest liberalities of the rich, and will accordingly be accepted of by God, and get your reward: for it is our Saviour's own doctrine, when the widow gave her two mites. The rich give out of their abundance; that is to say, what they give, they do not feel it in their way of living: but the poor man, who giveth out of his little stock, must spare it from the necessary food and raiment of himself and his family. And therefore our Saviour adds, "That the widow gave "more than all who went before her; for she gave "all she had, even all her living;" and so went home utterly unprovided to supply her necessities.

Lastly, As it appeareth from what hath been said, that

Digitized by Google

that you of the lower rank have, in reality, a greater share of happiness, your work of salvation is easier, by your being liable to fewer temptations; and as your reward in Heaven is much more certain than it is to the rich, if you seriously perform your duty, for yours is the kingdom of Heaven; so your neglect of it will be less excusable, will meet with fewer allowances from God, and will be punished with double stripes; for, the most unknowing among you cannot plead ignorance in what you have been so early taught, I hope, so often instructed in, and which is so easy to be understood, I mean the art of leading a life agreeable to the plain and positive laws of God. Perhaps you may think you lie under one disadvantage, which the great and rich have not; that idleness will certainly reduce you to beggary; whereas those who abound in wealth, lie under no necessity either of labour, or temperance, to keep enough to live on. But this is indeed one part of your happiness, that the lowness of your condition, in a manner forceth you to what is pleasing to God, and necessary for your daily support. Thus your duty and interest are always the same.

To conclude; since our blessed Lord, instead of a rich and honourable station in this world, was pleased to choose his lot among men of the lower condition; let not those on whom the bounty of Providence hath bestowed wealth and honours, despise the men who are placed in an humble and inferiour station; but rather, with their utmost power, by their countenance, by their protection, by just payment for their honest labour, encourage their daily endeavours for the virtuous support of themselves, and their families. On the other hand, let the poor labour to provide things honest

Digitized by Google

honest in the sight of all men; and so, with diligence in their several employments, live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present world, that they may obtain that glorious reward promised in the Gospel to the poor, I mean the kingdom of Heaven.

Now to God the Father, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON

THE CAUSES

OF THE

WRETCHED CONDITION OF IRELAND *.

PSALM cxliv, 13, 14.

That there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is the people that is in such a case.

IT is a very melancholy reflection, that such a country as ours, which is capable of producing all things necessary, and most things convenient for life, sufficient for the support of four times the number of its inhabitants, should yet lie under the heaviest load of misery and want; our streets crowded with beggars, so many of our lower sort of tradesmen, labourers, and artificers, not able to find clothes and food for their families.

I think it may therefore be of some use to lay

* This is not very properly styled a sermon; but, considered as a political dissertation, it has great merit, and it is highly worthy of the subject, and the author.

before

Digitized by Google

before you the chief causes of this wretched condition we are in, and then it will be easier to assign what remedies are in our power toward removing, at least, some part of these evils.

For, it is ever to be lamented, that we lie under many disadvantages, not by our own faults, which are peculiar to ourselves, and of which, no other nation under Heaven, hath any reason to complain.

I shall, therefore, first mention some causes of our miseries, which I doubt are not to be remedied, until God shall put it in the hearts of those who are the stronger, to allow us the common rights and privileges of brethren, fellow-subjects, and even of mankind.

The first cause of our misery, is the intolerable hardships we lie under in every branch of trade, by which we are become as hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to our rigorous neighbours.

The second cause of our miserable state is, the folly, the vanity, and ingratitude of those vast numbers, who think themselves too good to live in the country which gave them birth, and still gives them bread; and rather choose to pass their days, and consume their wealth, and draw out the very vitals of their mother kingdom, among those who heartily despise them.

These I have but lightly touched on, because I fear they are not to be redressed, and besides, I am very sensible how ready some people are to take offence at the honest truth; and for that reason, I shall omit several other grievances, under which we are long likely to groan.

I shall therefore go on to relate some other causes of this nation's poverty, by which, if they continue much longer, it must infallibly sink to utter ruin.

The

Digitized by Google

The first is, that monstrous pride and vanity in both sexes, especially the weaker sex, who in the midst of poverty, are suffered to run into all kind of expense and extravagance in dress, and particularly priding themselves to wear nothing but what cometh from abroad, disdaining the growth or manufacture of their own country, in those articles with which they can be better served at home at half the expense; and this is grown to such a height, that they will carry the whole yearly rent of a good estate at once on their body. And as there is in that sex a spirit of envy, by which they cannot endure to see others in a better habit than themselves, so those, whose fortunes can hardly support their families in the necessaries of life, will needs vie with the richest and greatest among us, to the ruin of themselves and their posterity.

Neither are the men less guilty of this pernicious folly, who, in imitation of a gaudiness and foppery of dress, introduced of late years into our neighbouring kingdom (as fools are apt to imitate only the defects of their betters) cannot find materials in their own country worthy to adorn their bodies of clay, while their minds are naked of every valuable quality.

Thus our tradesmen and shopkeepers, who deal in home goods, are left in a starving condition, and only those encouraged who ruin the kingdom by importing among us foreign vanities.

Another cause of our low condition, is, our great luxury; the chief support of which is, the materials of it brought to the nation in exchange for the few valuable things left us, whereby so many thousand families want the very necessaries of life.

Thirdly, in most parts of this kingdom, the natives are, from their infancy, so given up to idleness and sloth,

Digitized by Google

sloth, that they often choose to beg or steal, rather than support themselves with their own labour; they marry without the least view or thought of being able to make any provision for their families; and whereas, in all industrious nations, children are looked on as a help to their parents; with us, for want of being early trained to work, they are an intolerable burden at home, and a grievous charge upon the publick: as appeareth from the vast number of ragged and naked children in town and country, led about by strolling women, trained up in ignorance, and all manner of vice.

Lastly, A great cause of this nation's misery, is that Ægyptian bondage of cruel, oppressing, covetous landlords; expecting that all who live under them should make bricks without straw, who grieve and envy when they see a tenant of their own in a whole coat, or able to afford one comfortable meal in a month, by which the spirits of the people are broken, and made fit for slavery: the farmers and cottagers, almost through the whole kingdom, being, to all intents and purposes, as real beggars, as any of those to whom we give our charity in the streets. And these cruel landlords are every day unpeopling the kingdom, by forbidding their miserable tenants to till the earth, against common reason and justice, and contrary to the practice and prudence of all other nations; by which, numberless families have been forced either to leave the kingdom, or stroll about, and increase the number of our thieves and beggars.

Such, and much worse, is our condition at present, if I had leisure or liberty to lay it before you; and, therefore, the next thing which might be considered is, whether there may be any probable remedy found, at

Digitized by Google

at least against some part of these evils; for most of them are wholly desperate.

But this being too large a subject to be now handled, and the intent of my discourse confining me to give some directions concerning the poor of the city, I shall keep myself within those limits. It is indeed in the power of the lawgivers to found a school in every parish of the kingdom, for teaching the meaner and poorer sort of children to speak and to read the English tongue, and to provide a reasonable maintenance for the teachers. This would, in time, abolish that part of barbarity and ignorance, for which our natives are so despised by all foreigners: this would bring them to think and act according to the rules of reason, by which a spirit of industry, and thrift, and honesty would be introduced among them. And, indeed, considering how small a tax would suffice for such a work, it is a publick scandal that such a thing should never have been endeavoured, or, perhaps, so much as thought on.

To supply the want of such a law, several pious persons, in many parts of this kingdom, have been prevailed on, by the great endeavours and good example set them by the clergy, to erect charity schools in several parishes, to which very often the richest parishioners contribute the least. In these schools, children are, or ought to be, trained up to read and write, and cast accounts; and these children should, if possible, be of honest parents, gone to decay through age, sickness, or other unavoidable calamity, by the hand of God; not the brood of wicked strollers; for it is by no means reasonable, that the charity of well-inclined people should be applied to encourage

Digitized by Google

the lewdness of those profligate, abandoned women, who crowd our streets with their borrowed or spurious issue.

In those hospitals which have good foundations and rents to support them, whereof, to the scandal of Christianity, there are very few in this kingdom: I say, in such hospitals, the children maintained ought to be only of decayed citizens, and freemen, and be bred up to good trades. But in these small parish charity schools, which have no support but the casual good will of charitable people, I do altogether disapprove the custom of putting the children apprentice, except to the very meanest trades; otherwise the poor honest citizen, who is just able to bring up his child, and pay a small sum of money with him to a good master, is wholly defeated, and the bastard issue, perhaps of some beggar, preferred before him. And hence we come to be so overstocked with apprentices and journeymen, more than our discouraged country can employ; and I fear, the greatest part of our thieves, pickpockets, and other vagabonds, are of this number.

Therefore, in order to make these parish charity schools of great and universal use, I agree with the opinion of many wise persons, that a new turn should be given to this whole matter.

I think there is no complaint more just than what we find in almost every family, of the folly and ignorance, the fraud and knavery, the idleness and viciousness, the wasteful squandering temper of servants; who are, indeed, become one of the many publick grievances of the kingdom; whereof, I believe there are few masters that now hear me, who are not convinced by their own experience. And I am very confident,

Digitized by Google

confident, that more families, of all degrees, have been ruined by the corruptions of servants, than by all other causes put together. Neither is this to be wondered at, when we consider from what nurseries so many of them are received into our houses. The first is the tribe of wicked boys, wherewith most corners of this town are pestered, who haunt publick doors. These, having been born of beggars, and bred to pilfer as soon as they can go or speak, as years come on, are employed in the lowest offices to get themselves bread, are practised in all manner of villany, and when they are grown up, if they are not entertained in a gang of thieves, are forced to seek for a service. The other nursery is the barbarous and desert part of the country, from whence such lads come up hither to seek their fortunes, who are bred up from the dunghill in idleness, ignorance, lying and thieving. From these two nurseries, I say, a great number of our servants come to us, sufficient to corrupt all the rest. Thus the whole race of servants in this kingdom have gotten so ill a reputation, that some persons from England, come over hither into great stations, are said to have absolutely refused admitting any servant born among us into their families. Neither can they be justly blamed: for, although it is not impossible to find an honest native fit for a good service, yet the inquiry is too troublesome, and the hazard too great, for a stranger to attempt.

If we consider the many misfortunes that befal private families, it will be found that servants are the causes and instruments of them all: are our goods embezzled, wasted, and destroyed? is our house burnt to the ground? it is by the sloth, the drunken-

Digitized by Google

ness or the villany of servants. Are we robbed and murdered in our beds? it is by confederacy with our servants. Are we engaged in quarrels and misunderstandings with our neighbours? these were all begun and inflamed by the false, malicious tongues of our servants. Are the secrets of our family betrayed, and evil repute spread of us? our servants were the authors. Do false accusers rise up against us? (an evil too frequent in this country) they have been tampering with our servants. Do our children discover folly, malice, pride, cruelty, revenge, undutifulness in their words and actions? are they seduced to lewdness or scandalous marriages? it is all by our servants. Nay, the very mistakes, follies, blunders, and absurdities of those in our service, are able to ruffle and discompose the mildest nature, and are often of such consequence, as to put whole families into confusion.

Since therefore not only our domestick peace and quiet, and the welfare of our children, but even the very safety of our lives, reputations, and fortunes, have so great a dependence upon the choice of our servants, I think it would well become the wisdom of the nation to make some provision in so important an affair. But in the mean time, and perhaps to better purpose, it were to be wished, that the children of both sexes, entertained in the parish charity schools, were bred up in such a manner, as would give them a teachable disposition, and qualify them to learn whatever is required in any sort of service. For instance, they should be taught to read and write, to know somewhat in casting accounts, to understand the principles of religion, to practise cleanliness, to get a spirit of honesty, industry, and thrift, and be severely

Digitized by Google

severely punished for every neglect in any of these particulars. For, it is the misfortune of mankind, that if they are not used to be taught in their early childhood, whereby to acquire what I call a teachable disposition, they cannot, without great difficulty, learn the easiest thing in the course of their lives, but are always awkward and unhandy; their minds, as well as bodies, for want of early practice, growing stiff and unmanageable; as we observe in the sort of gentlemen, who, kept from school by the indulgence of their parents but a few years, are never able to recover the time they have lost, and grow up in ignorance and all manner of vice, whereof we have too many examples all over the nation. But to return to what I was saying: if these charity children were trained up in the manner I mentioned, and then bound apprentices in the families of gentlemen and citizens (for which a late law giveth great encouragement) being accustomed from their first entrance to be always learning some useful thing, they would learn, in a month, more than another, without those advantages, can do in a year; and in the mean time, be very useful in a family, as far as their age and strength would allow. And when such children come to years of discretion, they will probably be a useful example to their fellow-servants, at least they will prove a strong check upon the rest; for, I suppose, every body will allow, that one good, honest, diligent servant in a house, may prevent abundance of mischief in the family.

These are the reasons for which I urge this matter so strongly, and I hope those who listen to me will consider them.

I shall now say something about that great number

Digitized by Google

of poor, who, under the name of common beggars, infest our streets, and fill our ears with their continual cries, and craving importunity. This I shall venture to call an unnecessary evil, brought upon us from the gross neglect, and want of proper management, in those whose duty it is to prevent it. But, before I proceed farther, let me humbly presume to vindicate the justice and mercy of God, and his dealings with mankind. Upon this particular he hath not dealt so hardly with his creatures as some would imagine, when they see so many miserable objects ready to perish for want: for, it would infallibly be found, upon strict inquiry, that there is hardly one in twenty of those miserable objects, who do not owe their present poverty to their own faults, to their present sloth and negligence, to their indiscreet marriage without the least prospect of supporting a family, to their foolish expensiveness, to their drunkenness, and other vices, by which they have squandered their gettings, and contracted diseases in their old age. And to speak freely, is it any way reasonable or just, that those who have denied themselves many lawful satisfactions and conveniencies of life, from a principle of conscience as well as prudence, that they might not be a burden to the publick, should be charged with supporting others, who have brought themselves to less than a morsel of bread, by their idleness, extravagance, and vice? Yet such, and no other, are far the greatest number not only of those who beg in our streets, but even of what we call poor decayed housekeepers, whom we are apt to pity as real objects of charity, and distinguish them from common beggars, although, in truth, they both owe their undoing to the same causes; only the former are either too nicely bred

Digitized by Google

bred to endure walking half naked in the streets, or too proud to own their wants. For the artificer or other tradesman, who pleadeth he is grown too old to work or look after business, and therefore exacteth assistance as a decayed housekeeper; may we not ask him, why he did not take care, in his youth and strength of days, to make some provision against old age, when he saw so many examples before him of people undone by their idleness and vicious extravagance? and to go a little higher; whence cometh it that so many citizens and shopkeepers, of the most creditable trade, who once made a good figure, go to decay by their expensive pride and vanity, affecting to educate and dress their children above their abilities, or the state of life they ought to expect?

However, since the best of us have too many infirmities to answer for, we ought not to be severe upon those of others; and therefore if our brother, through grief, or sickness, or other incapacity, is not in a condition to preserve his being, we ought to support him to the best of our power, without reflecting overseriously on the causes that brought him to his misery. But in order to this, and to turn our charity into its proper channel, we ought to consider who and where those objects are, whom it is chiefly incumbent upon us to support.

By the ancient law of this realm, still in force, every parish is obliged to maintain its own poor; which although some may think to be not very equal, because many parishes are very rich, and have few poor among them, and others the contrary; yet, I think, may be justly defended: for, as to remote country parishes in the desert part of the kingdom, the necessaries of life are there so cheap, that the infirm poor

Digitized by Google

may be provided for with little burden to the inhabitants. But in what I am going to say, I shall confine myself only to this city; where we are overrun not only with our own poor, but with a far greater number from every part of the nation. Now, I say, this evil of being encumbered with so many foreign beggars, who have not the least title to our charity, and whom it is impossible for us to support, may be easily remedied, if the government of this city, in conjunction with the clergy and parish officers, would think it worth their care; and I am sure few things deserve it better. For, if every parish would take a list of those begging poor which properly belong to it, and compel each of them to wear a badge, marked and numbered, so as to be seen and known by all they meet, and confine them to beg within the limits of their own parish, severely punishing them when they offend, and driving out all interlopers from other parishes, we could then make a computation of their numbers; and the strollers from the country being driven away, the remainder would not be too many for the charity of those who pass by to maintain; neither would any beggar, although confined to his own parish, be hindered from receiving the charity of the whole town; because, in this case, those well-disposed persons who walk the streets, will give their charity to such whom they think proper objects, wherever they meet them, provided they are found in their own parishes, and wearing their badges of distinction. And, as to those parishes which border upon the skirts and suburbs of the town, where country strollers are used to harbour themselves, they must be forced to go back to their homes, when they find no body to relieve them, because they want that mark which

Digitized by Google

which only gives them licence to beg. Upon this point, it were to be wished, that inferiour parish officers had better encouragement given them to perform their duty in driving away all beggars who do not belong to the parish, instead of conniving at them, as it is said they do for some small contribution; for the whole city would save much more by ridding themselves of many hundred beggars, than they would lose by giving parish officers a reasonable support.

It should seem a strange, unaccountable thing, that those who have probably been reduced to want by riot, lewdness, and idleness, although they have assurance enough to beg alms publickly from all they meet, should yet be too proud to wear the parish badge, which would turn so much to their own advantage, by ridding them of such great numbers, who now intercept the greatest part of what belongeth to them: yet it is certain, that there are very many who publickly declare they will never wear those badges, and many others who either hide or throw them away: but the remedy for this is very short, easy, and just, by trying them like vagabonds and sturdy beggars, and forcibly driving them out of the town.

Therefore, as soon as this expedient of wearing badges shall be put in practice, I do earnestly exhort all those who hear me, never to give their alms to any publick beggar who doth not fully comply with this order; by which our number of poor will be so reduced, that it will be much easier to provide for the rest. Our shop doors will be no longer crowded with so many thieves and pickpockets, in beggars habits,

Digitized by Google

habits, nor our streets so dangerous to those who are forced to walk in the night.

Thus I have, with great freedom, delivered my thoughts upon this subject, which so nearly concerneth us. It is certainly a bad scheme, to any Christian country, which God hath blessed with fruitfulness, and where the people enjoy the just rights and privileges of mankind, that there should be any beggars at all. But, alas! among us, where the whole nation itself is almost reduced to beggary, by the disadvantages we lie under, and the hardships we are forced to bear; the laziness, ignorance, thoughtlessness, squandering temper, slavish nature, and uncleanly manner of living in the poor popish natives, together with the cruel oppressions of their landlords, who delight to see their vassals in the dust; I say, that in such a nation, how can we otherwise expect than to be overrun with objects of misery and want? Therefore, there can be no other method to free this city from so intolerable a grievance, than by endeavouring, as far as in us lies, that the burden may be more equally divided, by contributing to maintain our own poor, and forcing the strollers and vagabonds to return to their several homes in the country, there to smite the conscience of those oppressors who first stripped them of all their substance.

I might here, if the time would permit, offer many arguments to persuade to works of charity; but you hear them so often from the pulpit, that I am willing to hope you may not now want them. Besides, my present design was only to show where your alms would be best bestowed, to the honour of God, your own ease and advantage, the service of your country,

Digitized by Google

country, and the benefit of the poor. I desire you will all weigh and consider what I have spoken, and, according to your several stations and abilities, endeavour to put it in practice; and God give you good success. To whom, with the Son and Holy Ghost, be all honour, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

UPON

SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

ACTS, XX. 9.

And there sat in the window a certain young man named EUTICHUS, *being fallen into a deep sleep; and while* PAUL *was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.*

I HAVE chosen these words with design, if possible, to disturb some part in this audience of half an hour's sleep, for the convenience and exercise whereof this place, at this season of the day, is very much celebrated.

There is indeed one mortal disadvantage to which all preaching is subject; that those, who, by the wickedness of their lives, stand in greatest need, have usually the smallest share; for either they are absent upon the account of idleness, or spleen, or hatred to religion, or in order to doze away the intemperance of the week: or, if they do come, they are sure to employ their minds rather any other way, than regarding or attending to the business of the place.

The

Digitized by Google

The accident which happened to this young man in the text, hath not been sufficient to discourage his successors: But, because the preachers now in the world, however they may exceed St. Paul in the art of setting men to sleep, do extremely fall short of him in the working of miracles; therefore men are become so cautious, as to choose more safe and convenient stations and postures for taking their repose, without hazard of their persons; and upon the whole matter, choose rather to trust their destruction to a miracle, than their safety. However, this being not the only way by which the lukewarm Christians and scorners of the age discover their neglect and contempt of preaching, I shall enter expressly into consideration of this matter, and order my discourse in the following method:

First, I shall produce several instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

Secondly, I shall reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching.

Thirdly, I shall set forth the great evil of this neglect and contempt of preaching, and discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

Lastly, I shall offer some remedies against this great and spreading evil.

First, I shall produce certain instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

These may be reduced under two heads. First, men's absence from the service of the church; and secondly, their misbehaviour when they are here.

The

Digitized by Google

The first instance of men's neglect, is in their frequent absence from the church.

There is no excuse so trivial, that will not pass upon some men's consciences to excuse their attendance at the publick worship of God. Some are so unfortunate as to be always indisposed on the Lord's day, and think nothing so unwholesome as the air of a church. Others have their affairs so oddly contrived, as to be always unluckily prevented by business. With some it is a great mark of wit, and deep understanding to stay at home on Sundays. Others again discover strange fits of laziness, that seize them, particularly on that day, and confine them to their beds. Others are absent out of mere contempt of religion. And, lastly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of rest, and therefore claim the privilege of their castle, to keep the sabbath by eating, drinking, and sleeping, after the toil and labour of the week. Now in all this, the worst circumstance is, that these persons are such, whose companies are most required, and who stand most in need of a physician.

Secondly, Men's great neglect and contempt of preaching appear by their misbehaviour when at church.

If the audience were to be ranked under several heads, according to their behaviour when the word of God is delivered, how small a number would appear of those who receive it as they ought? How much of the seed then sown would be found to fall by the way side, upon stony ground, or among thorns? and how little good ground would there be to take it? A preacher cannot look round from the pulpit, without observing, that some are in a perpetual whisper, and by

Digitized by Google

by their air and gesture, give occasion to suspect that they are in those very minutes defaming their neighbour. Others, have their eyes and imagination constantly engaged in such a circle of objects, perhaps to gratify the most unwarrantable desires, that they never once attend to the business of the place; the sound of the preacher's words do not so much as once interrupt them. Some have their minds wandering among idle, worldly, or vicious thoughts. Some lie at catch to ridicule whatever they hear, and with much wit and humour provide a stock of laughter, by furnishing themselves from the pulpit. But, of all misbehaviour none is comparable to that of those who come here to sleep; opium is not so stupifying to many persons as an afternoon sermon. Perpetual custom hath so brought it about, that the words of whatever preacher, become only a sort of uniform sound at a distance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the senses. For that it is the very sound of the sermon which bindeth up their faculties, is manifest from hence, because they all awake so very regularly as soon as it ceaseth, and with much devotion receive the blessing, dozed and besotted with indecencies I am ashamed to repeat.

I proceed, Secondly, to reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching, and to show the unreasonableness of them.

Such unwarrantable demeanour as I have described among Christians, in the house of God, in a solemn assembly, while their faith and duty are explained and delivered, have put those who are guilty, upon inventing some excuses to extenuate their fault: This they do by turning the blame either upon the particular preacher, or upon preaching in general. First, they object

Digitized by Google

object against the particular preacher; his manner, his delivery, his voice are disagreeable; his style and expression are flat and slow; sometimes improper and absurd; the matter is heavy, trivial, and insipid; sometimes despicable, and perfectly ridiculous; or else, on the other side, he runs up into unintelligible speculation, empty notions, and abstracted flights, all clad in words above usual understandings.

Secondly, They object against preaching in general; it is a perfect road of talk; they know already whatever can be said; they have heard the same a hundred times over. They quarrel that preachers do not relieve an old beaten subject with wit and invention; and that now the art is lost of moving men's passions, so common among the ancient orators of Greece and Rome. These, and the like objections, are frequently in the mouths of men who despise the foolishness of preaching. But let us examine the reasonableness of them.

The doctrine delivered by all preachers is the same: "So we preach, and so ye believe:" But the manner of delivering is suited to the skill and abilities of each, which differ in preachers, just as in the rest of mankind. However, in personal dislikes of a particular preacher, are these men sure they are always in the right? do they consider how mixed a thing is every audience, whose taste and judgment differ, perhaps, every day, not only from each other, but themselves? and how to calculate a discourse that shall exactly suit them all, is beyond the force and reach of human reason, knowledge, or invention. Wit and eloquence are shining qualities, that God hath imparted, in great degrees, to very few; nor any more to be expected, in the generality of any rank among men, than riches and

Digitized by Google

and honour. But farther: if preaching in general be all old and beaten, and that they are already so well acquainted with it, more shame and guilt to them who so little edify by it. But, these men, whose ears are so delicate as not to endure a plain discourse of religion, who expect a constant supply of wit and eloquence on a subject handled so many thousand times; what will they say when we turn the objection upon themselves, who with all the rude and profane liberty of discourse they take, upon so many thousand subjects, are so dull as to furnish nothing but tedious repetitions, and little paltry, nauseous commonplaces, so vulgar, so worn, or so obvious, as, upon any other occasion, but that of advancing vice, would be hooted off the stage? Nor, lastly, are preachers justly blamed for neglecting human oratory to move the passions, which is not the business of a Christian orator, whose office it is only to work upon faith and reason. All other eloquence hath been a perfect cheat, to stir up men's passions against truth and justice, for the service of a faction; to put false colours upon things, and by an amusement of agreeable words, make the worst reason appear to be the better. This is certainly not to be allowed in Christian eloquence, and, therefore, St. Paul took quite the other course; he "came not with the excellency of words, "or enticing speech of men's wisdom, but in plain "evidence of the spirit and power." And perhaps it was for that reason, the young man Eutychus, used to the Grecian eloquence, grew tired, and fell so fast asleep.

I go on, Thirdly, to set forth the great evil of this neglect and scorn of preaching, and to discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

Digitized by Google

I think it is obvious, that this neglect of preaching hath very much occasioned the great decay of religion among us. To this may be imputed no small part of that contempt some men bestow on the clergy; for, whoever talketh without being regarded, is sure to be despised. To this we owe, in a great measure, the spreading of atheism and infidelity among us; for, religion, like all other things, is soonest put out of countenance by being ridiculed. The scorn of preaching might perhaps have been at first introduced by men of nice ears and refined taste; but it is now become a spreading evil, through all degrees, and both sexes; for, since sleeping, talking, and laughing, are qualities sufficient to furnish out a critick, the meanest and most ignorant have set up a title, and succeeded in it as well as their betters. Thus are the last efforts of reforming mankind rendered wholely useless: "How shall they hear," saith the apostle, "without a preacher?" But, if they have a preacher, and make it a point of wit or breeding, not to hear him, what remedy is left? To this neglect of preaching, we may also entirely impute that gross ignorance among us in the very principles of religion, which it is amazing to find in persons who very much value their own knowledge and understanding in other things? yet it is a visible, inexcusable ignorance, even in the meanest among us, considering the many advantages they have of learning their duty. And it hath been the great encouragement to all manner of vice: For, in vain we preach down sin to a people, "whose hearts are "waxed gross, whose ears are dull of hearing, and "whose eyes are closed." Therefore Christ himself, in his discourses, frequently rouseth up the attention

Digitized by Google

attention of the multitude, and of his disciples themselves, with this expression, "He that hath ears "to hear let him hear." But, among all neglects of preaching, none is so fatal as that of sleeping in the house of God; a scorner may listen to truth and reason, and in time grow serious; an unbeliever may feel the pangs of a guilty conscience; one whose thoughts or eyes wander among other objects, may, by a lucky word, be called back to attention: But the sleeper shuts up all avenues to his soul: He is "like the deaf adder, that hearkeneth not to the "voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." And we may preach with as good success to the grave that is under his feet.

But the great evil of this neglect will farther yet appear, from considering the real causes whence it proceedeth; whereof, the first, I take to be an evil conscience. Many men come to church to save or gain a reputation, or because they will not be singular, but comply with an established custom; yet, all the while, they are loaded with the guilt of old rooted sins. These men can expect to hear of nothing but terrours and threatenings, their sins laid open in true colours, and eternal misery the reward of them; therefore, no wonder they stop their ears, and divert their thoughts, and seek any amusement rather than stir the Hell within them.

Another cause of this neglect is, a heart set upon worldly things. Men whose minds are much enslaved to earthly affairs all the week, cannot disengage or break the chain of their thoughts so suddenly, as to apply to a discourse that is wholly foreign to what they have most at heart. Tell a usurer of charity, and mercy, and restitution, you talk to the deaf:

Digitized by Google

his heart and soul, with all his senses, are got among his bags, or he is gravely asleep, and dreaming of a mortgage. Tell a man of business, that the cares of the world choke the good seed; that we must not encumber ourselves with much serving; that the salvation of his soul is the one thing necessary: You see, indeed, the shape of a man before you, but his faculties are all gone off among clients and papers, thinking how to defend a bad cause, or find flaws in a good one; or he weareth out the time in drowsy nods.

A third cause of the great neglect and scorn of preaching, ariseth from the practice of men who set up to decry and disparage religion; these, being zealous to promote infidelity and vice, learn a rote of buffoonry, that serveth all occasions, and refutes the strongest arguments for piety and good manners. These have a set of ridicule calculated for all sermons, and all preachers, and can be extremely witty as often as they please upon the same fund.

Let me now, in the last place, offer some remedies against this great evil.

It will be one remedy against the contempt of preaching, rightly to consider the end for which it was designed. There are many who place abundance of merit in going to church, although it be with no other prospect but that of being well entertained, wherein if they happen to fail, they return wholly disappointed. Hence it is become an impertinent vein among people of all sorts to hunt after what they call a good sermon, as if it were a matter of pastime and diversion. Our business, alas! is quite another thing, either to learn, or, at least, be reminded

Digitized by Google

reminded of our duty; to apply the doctrines delivered, compare the rules we hear, with our lives and actions, and find wherein we have transgressed. These are the dispositions men should bring into the house of God, and then they will be little concerned about the preacher's wit or eloquence, nor be curious to inquire out his faults and infirmities, but consider how to correct their own.

Another remedy against the contempt of preaching is, that men would consider, whether it be not reasonable to give more allowance for the different abilities of preachers, than they usually do; refinements of style, and flights of wit, as they are not properly the business of any preacher, so they cannot possibly be the talents of all. In most other discourses, men are satisfied with sober sense and plain reason: and, as understandings usually go, even that is not over frequent. Then why they should be so over nice in expectation of eloquence, where it is neither necessary or convenient, is hard to imagine.

Lastly, The scorners of preaching would do well to consider, that this talent of ridicule, they value so much, is a perfection very easily acquired, and applied to all things whatsoever; neither is any thing at all the worse, because it is capable of being perverted to burlesque: Perhaps it may be the more perfect upon that score; since we know, the most celebrated pieces have been thus treated with greatest success. It is in any man's power to suppose a fool's cap on the wisest head, and then laugh at his own supposition. I think there are not many things cheaper than supposing and laughing; and if the uniting these two talents can bring a thing into contempt, it is hard to know where it may end.

Digitized by Google

To conclude. These considerations may, perhaps, have some effect while men are awake; but what arguments shall we use to the sleeper? what methods shall we take to hold open his eyes? Will he be moved by considerations of common civility? We know it is reckoned a point of very bad manners to sleep in private company, when, perhaps, the tedious impertinence of many talkers would render it at least as excusable as the dullest sermon. Do they think it a small thing to watch four hours at a play, where all virtue and religion are openly reviled: and can they not watch one half hour to hear them defended? Is this to deal like a judge (I mean like a good judge) to listen on one side of the cause, and sleep on the other? I shall add but one word more: That this indecent sloth is very much owing to that luxury and excess men usually practice upon this day, by which half the service thereof is turned to sin; men dividing their time between God and their bellies, when, after a gluttonous meal, their senses dozed and stupified, they retire to God's house to sleep out the afternoon. Surely, brethren, these things ought not so to be.

"He that hath ears to hear let him hear. And God "give us all grace to hear and receive his holy "word to the salvation of our own souls."

Digitized by Google

A

SERMON

ON THE

WISDOM OF THIS WORLD.

1 COR. iii, 19.

The wisdom of this world is foolishness with GOD.

IT is remarkable, that about the time of our Saviour's coming into the world, all kinds of learning flourished to a very great degree; insomuch that nothing is more frequent in the mouths of many men, even such who pretend to read and to know, than an extravagant praise and opinion of the wisdom and virtue of the Gentile sages of those days, and likewise of those ancient philosophers who went before them, whose doctrines are left upon record, either by themselves, or other writers. As far as this may be taken for granted, it may be said, that the Providence of God brought this about for several very wise ends and purposes: for it is certain, that these philosophers had been a long time before, searching out where to fix the true happiness of man; and not being able to agree upon any certainty about it, they could not possibly but conclude, if they judged impartially, that all their inquiries were, in the end, but vain and fruitless: the consequence of which must be, not only an acknowledgment of the weakness of all human wisdom, but likewise an open passage hereby made, for letting in those beams of light, which the glorious

Digitized by Google

sunshine of the Gospel then brought into the world, by revealing those hidden truths, which they had so long before been labouring to discover, and fixing the general happiness of mankind, beyond all controversy and dispute. And therefore, the Providence of God wisely suffered men of deep genius and learning then to arise, who should search into the truth of the Gospel now made known, and canvass its doctrines with all the subtilty and knowledge they were masters of, and in the end freely acknowledge, that to be the true wisdom only, " which cometh from above."

However, to make a farther inquiry into the truth of this observation, I doubt not but there is reason to think, that a great many of those encomiums given to ancient philosophers, are taken upon trust, and by a sort of men, who are not very likely to be at the pains of an inquiry, that would employ so much time and thinking. For, the usual ends why men affect this kind of discourse, appear generally to be either out of ostentation, that they may pass upon the world for persons of great knowledge and observation; or, what is worse, there are some who highly exalt the wisdom of those Gentile sages, thereby obliquely to glance at, and traduce Divine Revelation, and more especially that of the Gospel; for the consequence they would have us draw, is this: That since those ancient philosophers rose to a greater pitch of wisdom and virtue, than was ever known among Christians, and all this purely upon the strength of their own reason, and liberty of thinking, therefore it must follow, that either all Revelation is false, or, what is worse, that it has depraved the nature of man, and left him worse than it found him.

But this high opinion of Heathen wisdom, is not very

Digitized by Google

very ancient in the world, nor at all countenanced from primitive times. Our Saviour had but a low esteem of it, as appears by his treatment of the Pharisees and Saducees, who followed the doctrines of Plato and Epicurus. St. Paul likewise, who was well versed in all the Grecian literature, seems very much to despise their philosophy, as we find in his writings; cautioning the Colossians to "beware lest any man "spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit." And in another place, he advises Timothy to "avoid "prophane and vain babblings, and oppositions of "science falsely so called;" that is, not to introduce into the Christian doctrine the janglings of those vain philosophers, which they would pass upon the world for science. And the reasons he gives are, first, That those who professed them did err concerning the faith: secondly, Because the knowledge of them did increase ungodliness, vain babblings, being otherwise expounded vanities, or empty sounds; that is, tedious disputes about words, which the philosophers were always so full of, and which were the natural product of disputes and dissensions between several sects.

Neither had the primitive fathers any great or good opinion of the Heathen philosophy, as it is manifest from several passages in their writings: so that this vein of affecting to raise the reputation of those sages so high, is a mode and a vice but of yesterday, assumed chiefly, as I have said, to disparage revealed knowledge, and the consequences of it among us.

Now, because this is a prejudice which may prevail with some persons, so far as to lessen the influence of the Gospel; and whereas, therefore, this is an opinion which men of education are likely to be encountered with, when they have produced themselves into

Digitized by Google

into the world; I shall endeavour to show that their preference of Heathen wisdom and virtue, before that of the Christian, is every way unjust, and grounded upon ignorance or mistake: in order to which, I shall consider four things.

First, I shall produce certain points, wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy in general fell short, and was very imperfect.

Secondly, I shall show, in several instances, where some of the most renowned philosophers have been grossly defective in their lessons of morality.

Thirdly, I shall prove the perfection of Christian wisdom, from the proper characters and marks of it.

Lastly, I shall show that the great examples of wisdom and virtue, among the Heathen wise men, were produced by personal merit, and not influenced by the doctrine of any sect; whereas, in Christianity, it is quite the contrary.

First, I shall produce certain points, wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy, in general fell short, and was very imperfect.

My design is, to persuade men, that Christian philosophy is in all things preferable to Heathen wisdom; from which, or its professors, I shall however have no occasion to detract. They were as wise, and as good, as it was possible for them to be under such disadvantages, and would have probably been infinitely more so, with such aids as we enjoy: but our lessons are certainly much better, however our practices may fall short.

The first point I shall mention, is, that universal defect which was in all their schemes, that they could not agree about their chief good, or wherein to place the happiness of mankind; nor had any of them a tolerable

Digitized by Google

tolerable answer upon this difficulty, to satisfy a reasonable person. For, to say, as the most plausible of them did, "that happiness consisted in virtue," was but vain babbling, and a mere sound of words, to amuse others and themselves; because they were not agreed what this virtue was, or wherein it did consist; and likewise, because several among the best of them taught quite different things, placing happiness in health or good fortune, in riches or in honour, where all were agreed that virtue was not, as I shall have occasion to show, when I speak of their particular tenets.

The second great defect in the Gentile philosophy, was, that it wanted some suitable reward, proportioned to the better part of man, his mind, as an encouragement for his progress in virtue. The difficulties they met with upon the score of this default were great, and not to be accounted for: bodily goods, being only suitable to bodily wants, are no rest at all for the mind; and if they were, yet are they not the proper fruits of wisdom and virtue, being equally attainable by the ignorant and wicked. Now, human nature is so constituted, that we can never pursue any thing heartily, but upon hopes of a reward. If we run a race, it is in expectation of a prize; and the greater the prize, the faster we run; for an incorruptible crown, if we understand it, and believe it to be such, more than a corruptible one. But some of the philosophers gave all this quite another turn, and pretended to refine so far, as to call virtue its own reward, and worthy to be followed only for itself: whereas, if there be any thing in this more than the sound of the words, it is at least too abstracted to become a universal influencing principle in

Digitized by Google

in the world, and therefore could not be of general use.

It was the want of assigning some happiness proportioned to the soul of man, that caused many of them, either, on the one hand, to be sour and morose, supercilious and untreatable; or, on the other, to fall into the vulgar pursuits of common men, to hunt after greatness and riches, to make their court, and to serve occasions; as Plato did to the younger Dionysius, and Aristotle to Alexander the great. So impossible it is for a man, who looks no farther than the present world, to fix himself long in a contemplation where the present world has no part: he has no sure hold, no firm footing; he can never expect to remove the earth he rests upon, while he has no support besides for his feet, but wants, like Archimedes, some other place whereon to stand. To talk of bearing pain and grief, without any sort of present or future hope, cannot be purely greatness of spirit; there must be a mixture in it of affectation, and an allay of pride; or perhaps is wholly counterfeit.

It is true, there has been all along in the world a notion of rewards and punishments in another life: but it seems to have rather served as an entertainment to poets, or as a terrour of children, than a settled principle by which men pretended to govern any of their actions. The last celebrated words of Socrates, a little before his death, do not seem to reckon or build much upon any such opinion; and Cæsar made no scruple to disown it, and ridicule it in open senate.

Thirdly, The greatest and wisest of all their philosophers were never able to give any satisfaction to others and themselves, in their notions of a Deity. They were often extremely gross and absurd in their con-

Digitized by Google

conceptions; and those who made the fairest conjectures, are such as were generally allowed by the learned, to have seen the system of Moses, if I may so call it, who was in great reputation at that time in the Heathen world, as we find by Diodorus, Justin, Longinus, and other authors: for the rest, the wisest among them laid aside all notions after a Deity, as a disquisition vain and fruitless, which indeed it was, upon unrevealed principles; and those who ventured to engage too far, fell into incoherence and confusion.

Fourthly, Those among them who had the justest conceptions of a Divine power, and did also admit a Providence, had no notion at all of entirely relying and depending upon either; they trusted in themselves for all things; but, as for a trust or dependance upon God, they would not have understood the phrase; it made no part of the prophane style.

Therefore it was, that in all issues and events which they could not reconcile to their own sentiments of reason and justice, they were quite disconcerted: they had no retreat; but, upon every blow of adverse fortune, either affected to be indifferent, or grew sullen and severe, or else yielded and sunk like other men.

Having now produced certain points, wherein the wisdom and virtue of all unrevealed philosophy fell short, and was very imperfect; I go on, in the second place, to show, in several instances, where some of the most renowned philosophers have been grossly defective in their lessons of morality.

Thales, the founder of the Ionic sect, so celebrated for morality, being asked how a man might bear ill-fortune with greatest ease, answered, "By seeing his "enemies in a worse condition." An answer truly barba-

Digitized by Google

barbarous, unworthy of human nature, and which included such consequences, as must destroy all society from the world.

Solon lamenting the death of a son, one told him, "You lament in vain." "Therefore," said he, "I "lament, because it is in vain." This was a plain confession how imperfect all his philosophy was, and that something was still wanting. He owned that all his wisdom and morals were useless, and this upon one of the most frequent accidents in life. How much better could he have learned to support himself even from David, by his entire dependence upon God; and that, before our Saviour had advanced the notions of religion, to the height and perfection, wherewith he hath instructed his disciples!

Plato himself, with all his refinements, placed happiness in wisdom, health, good fortune, honour, and riches; and held that they who enjoyed all these were perfectly happy: which opinion was indeed unworthy its owner, leaving the wise and good man, wholly at the mercy of uncertain chance, and to be miserable without resource.

His scholar Aristotle fell more grossly into the same notion, and plainly affirmed: "That virtue, "without the goods of fortune, was not sufficient for "happiness, but that a wise man must be miserable "in poverty and sickness." Nay, Diogenes himself, from whose pride and singularity one would have looked for other notions, delivered it as his opinion, "That a poor old man was the most miserable thing "in life."

Zeno also and his followers fell into many absurdities, among which nothing could be greater than that of maintaining all crimes to be equal; which, instead of

Digitized by Google

of making vice hateful, rendered it as a thing indifferent and familiar to all men.

Lastly, Epicurus had no notion of justice, but as it was profitable; and his placing happiness in pleasure, with all the advantages he could expound it by, was liable to very great exception: for, although he taught that pleasure did consist in virtue, yet he did not any way fix or ascertain the boundaries of virtue, as he ought to have done; by which means he misled his followers into the greatest vices, making their names to become odious and scandalous, even in the Heathen world.

I have produced these few instances from a great many others, to show the imperfection of Heathen philosophy, wherein I have confined myself wholly to their morality. And surely we may pronounce upon it in the words of St. James, that "This wisdom "descended not from above, but was earthly and "sensual." What if I had produced their absurd notions about God and the soul? It would then have completed the character given it by that Apostle, and appeared to have been devilish too. But it is easy to observe, from the nature of these few particulars, that their defects in morals, were purely the flagging and fainting of the mind, for want of a support by revelation from God.

I proceed, therefore, in the third place, to show the perfection of Christian wisdom from above; and I shall endeavour to make it appear, from those proper characters and marks of it, by the Apostle beforementioned, in the third chapter, and 15th, 16th, and 17th verses.

The words run thus:

"This

Digitized by Google

" This wisdom descendeth not from above; but is " earthly, sensual, devilish.

" For where envying and strife is, there is confu- " sion, and every evil work.

" But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, " then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, " full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, " and without hypocrisy."

" The wisdom from above is first pure." This purity of the mind and spirit is peculiar to the Gospel. Our Saviour says, " Blessed are the pure in heart, for " they shall see God." A mind free from all pollution of lusts shall have a daily vision of God, whereof unrevealed religion can form no notion. This is it that keeps us unspotted from the world; and hereby many have been prevailed upon to live in the practice of all purity, holiness, and righteousness, far beyond the examples of the most celebrated philosophers.

It is " peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." The Christian doctrine teacheth us all those dispositions that make us affable and courteous, gentle and kind, without any morose leaven of pride or vanity, which entered into the composition of most heathen schemes: so we are taught to be meek and lowly. Our Saviour's last legacy was peace; and he commands us to forgive our offending brother unto seventy times seven. Christian wisdom is full of mercy and good works, teaching the height of all moral virtues, of which the heathens fell infinitely short. Plato indeed (and it is worth observing) has somewhere a dialogue, or part of one, about forgiving our enemies, which was perhaps the highest strain ever reached by man, without divine assistance; yet how little is that to what our Saviour commands us! " To " love

Digitized by Google

" love them that hate us; to bless them that curse " us; and to do good to them that despitefully " use us."

Christian wisdom is without partiality; it is not calculated for this or that nation or people, but the whole race of mankind: not so the philosophical schemes, which were narrow and confined, adapted to their peculiar towns, governments, or sects; but, " in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh " righteousness, is accepted with him."

Lastly, It is without hypocrisy; it appears to be what it really is; it is all of a piece. By the doctrines of the Gospel, we are so far from being allowed to publish to the world those virtues we have not, that we are commanded to hide even from ourselves those we really have, and not to let our right hand know what our left hand does; unlike several branches of the Heathen wisdom, which pretended to teach insensibility and indifference, magnanimity and contempt of life, while, at the same time, in other parts, it belied its own doctrines.

I come now, in the last place, to show that the great examples of wisdom and virtue, among the Grecian sages, were produced by personal merit, and not influenced by the doctrine of any particular sect; whereas, in Christianity, it is quite the contrary.

The two virtues most celebrated by ancient moralists, were, Fortitude and Temperance, as relating to the government of man in his private capacity, to which their schemes were generally addressed and confined; and the two instances wherein those virtues arrived at the greatest height, were Socrates and Cato. But neither those, nor any other virtues possessed by

Digitized by Google

these two, were at all owing to any lessons or doctrines of a sect. For Socrates himself was of none at all: and although Cato was called a stoick, it was more from a resemblance of manners in his worst qualities, than that he avowed himself one of their disciples. The same may be affirmed of many other great men of antiquity. Whence I infer, that those who were renowned for virtue among them, were more obliged to the good natural dispositions of their own minds, than to the doctrines of any sect they pretended to follow.

On the other side, as the examples of fortitude and patience among the primitive Christians, have been infinitely greater and more numerous, so they were altogether the product of their principles and doctrine; and were such as the same persons, without those aids, would never have arrived to. Of this truth most of the apostles, with many thousand martyrs, are a cloud of witnesses beyond exception. Having therefore spoken so largely upon the former heads, I shall dwell no longer upon this.

And, if it should here be objected, Why does not Christianity still produce the same effects? it is easy to answer, First, That although the number of pretended Christians be great, yet that of true believers, in proportion to the other, was never so small; and it is a true lively faith alone, that, by the assistance of God's grace, can influence our practice.

Secondly, We may answer, that Christianity itself has very much suffered, by being blended up with Gentile philosophy. The Platonick system, first taken into religion, was thought to have given matter for some early heresies in the church. When disputes began to arise, the peripatetick forms were introduced by

Digitized by Google

by Scotus, as best fitted for controversy. And, however this may now have become necessary, it was surely the author of a litigious vein, which has since occasioned very pernicious consequences, stopped the progress of Christianity, and been a great promoter of vice, verifying that sentence given by St. James, and mentioned before, "Where envying and strife is, "there is confusion, and every evil work." This was the fatal stop to the Grecians, in their progress both of arts and arms; their wise men were divided under several sects, and their governments under several commonwealths, all in opposition to each other; which engaged them in eternal quarrels among themselves, while they should have been armed against the common enemy. And I wish we had no other examples, from the like causes, less foreign or ancient than that. Diogenes said, Socrates was a madman; the disciples of Zeno and Epicurus, nay of Plato and Aristotle, were engaged in fierce disputes about the most insignificant trifles. And if this be the present language and practice among us Christians, no wonder that Christianity does not still produce the same effects which it did at first, when it was received and embraced in its utmost purity and perfection: for such a wisdom as this cannot "descend from above;" but must be "earthly, sensual, devilish; full of con- "fusion and every evil work;" whereas "the wisdom "from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, "and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good "fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." This is the true heavenly wisdom, which Christianity only can boast of, and which the greatest of the Heathen wise men could never arrive at.

Now to God the Father, &c.

Digitized by Google

DOING GOOD:

A

SERMON,

ON THE

OCCASION OF WOOD'S PROJECT *.

WRITTEN IN 1724.

GALATIANS vi, 10.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.

NATURE directs every one of us, and God permits us, to consult our own private good, before the private good of any other person whatsoever. We are indeed, commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves, but not as well as ourselves. The love we have for ourselves, is to be the pattern of that love we ought to have toward our neighbour; but, as the copy doth not equal the original, so my neighbour cannot think it hard, if I prefer myself, who am the original, before him, who is only the copy. Thus,

* "I never," said the dean in a jocular conversation, "preached "but twice in my life: and then they were not sermons, but "pamphlets." Being asked on what subject; he replied, "They "were against Wood's halfpence." Pilkington, vol. 1, p. 56.

if

Digitized by Google

if any matter equally concern the life, the reputation, the profit of my neighbour, and my own; the law of nature, which is the law of God, obligeth me to take care of myself first, and afterward of him. And this I need not be at much pains in persuading you to; for the want of self-love, with regard to things of this world, is not among the faults of mankind. But then, on the other side, if, by a small hurt and loss to myself, I can procure a great good to my neighbour, in that case his interest is to be preferred. For example, if I can be sure of saving his life, without great danger to my own: if I can preserve him from being undone, without ruining myself; or recover his reputation, without blasting mine; all this I am obliged to do: and, if I sincerely perform it, I do then obey the command of God, in loving my neighbour as myself.

But, beside this love we owe to every man in his particular capacity under the title of our neighbour, there is yet a duty of a more large extensive nature incumbent on us; which is, our love to our neighbour in his publick capacity, as he is a member of that great body the commonwealth, under the same government with ourselves; and this is usually called love of the publick, and is a duty to which we are more strictly obliged than even that of loving ourselves; because therein ourselves are also contained, as well as all our neighbours in one great body. This love of the publick, or of the commonwealth, or love of our country, was in ancient times properly known by the name of virtue, because it was the greatest of all virtues, and was supposed to contain all virtues in it: and many great examples of this virtue are left to us on record, scarcely to be believed, or

Digitized by Google

even conceived, in such a base, corrupted, wicked age as this we live in. In those times, it was common for men to sacrifice their lives for the good of their country, although they had neither hope nor belief of future rewards; whereas, in our days, very few make the least scruple of sacrificing a whole nation, as well as their own souls, for a little present gain; which often hath been known to end in their own ruin in this world, as it certainly must in that to come.

Have we not seen men, for the sake of some petty employment, give up the very natural rights and liberties of their country, and of mankind, in the ruin of which themselves must at last be involved! Are not these corruptions gotten among the meanest of our people, who, for a piece of money, will give their votes at a venture, for the disposal of their own lives and fortunes, without considering whether it be to those who are most likely to betray or defend them? But, if I were to produce only one instance of a hundred, wherein we fail in this duty of loving our country, it would be an endless labour; and therefore I shall not attempt it.

But here I would not be misunderstood: by the love of our country, I do not mean loyalty to our king, for that is a duty of another nature; and a man may be very loyal, in the common sense of the word, without one grain of publick good at his heart. Witness this very kingdom we live in. I verily believe, that since the beginning of the world, no nation upon earth ever showed (all circumstances considered) such high constant marks of loyalty, in all their actions and behaviour, as we have done: and at the same time, no people ever appeared more utterly void of

Digitized by Google

of what is called a publick spirit. When I say the people, I mean the bulk or mass of the people; for I I have nothing to do with those in power.

Therefore I shall think my time not ill spent, if I can persuade most or all of you who hear me, to show the love you have for your country, by endeavouring, in your several stations, to do all the publick good you are able. For I am certainly persuaded, that all our misfortunes arise from no other original cause than that general disregard among us to the publick welfare.

I therefore undertake to show you three things:

First, That there are few people so weak or mean, who have it not sometimes in their power to be useful to the publick.

Secondly, That it is often in the power of the meanest among mankind to do mischief to the publick.

And, lastly, That all wilful injuries done to the publick, are very great and aggravated sins in the sight of God.

First, There are few people so weak or mean, who have it not sometimes in their power to be useful to the publick.

Solomon tells us of a poor wise man, who saved a city by his counsel. It hath often happened that a private soldier, by some unexpected brave attempt, hath been instrumental in obtaining a great victory. How many obscure men have been authors of very useful inventions, whereof the world now reaps the benefit! The very example of honesty and industry

Digitized by Google

a poor tradesman, will sometimes spread through a neighbourhood, when others see how successful he is; and thus so many useful members are gained, for which the whole body of the publick is the better. Whoever is blessed with a true publick spirit, God will certainly put it into his way to make use of that blessing, for the ends it was given him, by some means or other: and therefore it hath been observed, in most ages, that the greatest actions for the benefit of the commonwealth, have been performed by the wisdom or courage, the contrivance or industry, of particular men, and not of numbers; and that the safety of a kingdom hath often been owing to those hands, whence it was least expected.

But, secondly, It is often in the power of the meanest among mankind to do mischief to the publick: and hence arise most of those miseries with which the states and kingdoms of the earth are infested. How many great princes have been murdered by the meanest ruffians! The weakest hand can open a floodgate to drown a country, which a thousand of the strongest cannot stop. Those who have thrown off all regard for publick good, will often have it in their way to do publick evil, and will not fail to exercise that power whenever they can. The greatest blow given of late to this kingdom, was by the dishonesty of a few manufacturers; who, by imposing bad ware at foreign markets, in almost the only traffick permitted to us, did half ruin that trade; by which this poor unhappy kingdom now suffers in the midst of sufferings. I speak not here of persons in high stations, who ought to be free from all reflection, and are supposed always to intend the welfare of the community: but we now find by experience, that the meanest in-

Digitized by Google

instrument may, by the concurrence of accidents, have it in his power to bring a whole kingdom to the very brink of destruction, and is at this present endeavouring to finish his work; and hath agents among ourselves, who are contented to see their own country undone, to be small sharers in that iniquitous gain, which at last must end in their own ruin, as well as ours. I confess, it was chiefly the consideration of that great danger we are in, which engaged me to discourse to you on this subject, to exhort you to a love of your country, and a publick spirit, when all you have is at stake; to prefer the interest of your prince and your fellow subjects, before that of one destructive impostor, and a few of his adherents.

Perhaps it may be thought by some, that this way of discoursing is not so proper from the pulpit. But surely, when an open attempt is made, and far carried on, to make a great kingdom one large poor-house, to deprive us of all means to exercise hospitality or charity, to turn our cities and churches into ruins, to make the country a desert for wild beasts and robbers, to destroy all arts and sciences, all trades and manufactures, and the very tillage of the ground, only to enrich one obscure ill-designing projector and his followers; it is time for the pastor to cry out, "that "the wolf is getting into his flock," to warn them to stand together, and all to consult the common safety. And God be praised for his infinite goodness, in raising such a spirit of union among us, at least in this point, in the midst of all our former divisions; which union, if it continue, will, in all probability, defeat the pernicious design of this pestilent enemy to the nation!

But hence, it clearly follows how necessary the love of

Digitized by Google

of our country, or a publick spirit, is, in every particular man, since the wicked have so many opportunities of doing publick mischief. Every man is upon his guard for his private advantage; but, where the publick is concerned, he is apt to be negligent, considering himself only as one among two or three millions, among whom the loss is equally shared; and thus, he thinks, he can be no great sufferer. Meanwhile the trader, the farmer, and the shopkeeper, complain of the hardness and deadness of the times, and wonder whence it comes; while it is in a great measure owing to their own folly, for want of that love of their country, and publick spirit and firm union among themselves, which are so necessary to the prosperity of every nation.

Another method, by which the meanest wicked man may have it in his power to injure the publick, is false accusation; whereof this kingdom hath afforded too many examples: neither is it long since no man, whose opinions were thought to differ from those in fashion, could safely converse beyond his nearest friends, for fear of being sworn against, as a traitor, by those who made a traffick of perjury and subornation; by which, the very peace of the nation was disturbed, and men fled from each other as they would from a lion or a bear got loose. And it is very remarkable, that the pernicious project now in hand, to reduce us to beggary, was forwarded by one of these false accusers, who had been convicted of endeavouring, by perjury and subornation, to take away the lives of several innocent persons here among us: and, indeed, there could not be a more proper instrument for such a work.

Another method, by which the meanest people may

Digitized by Google

may do injury to the publick, is the spreading of lies and false rumours; thus raising a distrust among the people of a nation, causing them to mistake their true interest, and their enemies for their friends: and this hath been likewise too successful a practice among us, where we have known the whole kingdom misled by the grossest lies, raised upon occasion to serve some particular turn. As it hath also happened in the case I lately mentioned, where one obscure man, by representing our wants where they were least, and concealing them where they were greatest, had almost succeeded in a project of utterly ruining this whole kingdom; and may still succeed, if God doth not continue that publick spirit, which he hath almost miraculously kindled in us upon this occasion.

Thus we see the publick is many times, as it were, at the mercy of the meanest instrument, who can be wicked enough to watch opportunities of doing it mischief, upon the principles of avarice or malice; which I am afraid, are deeply rooted in too many breasts, and against which there can be no defence, but a firm resolution in all honest men, to be closely united and active in showing their love to their country, by preferring the publick interest to their present private advantage. If a passenger, in a great storm at sea, should hide his goods, that they might not be thrown overboard to lighten the ship, what would be the consequence? The ship is cast away, and he loses his life and goods together.

We have heard of men, who, through greediness of gain, have brought infected goods into a nation; which bred a plague, whereof the owners and their families perished first. Let those among us consider this and tremble, whose houses are privately stored with

Digitized by Google

with those materials of beggary and desolation, lately brought over to be scattered like a pestilence among their countrymen, which may probably first seize upon themselves and their families, until their houses shall be made a dunghill.

I shall mention one practice more, by which the meanest instruments often succeed in doing publick mischief; and this is by deceiving us with plausible arguments, to make us believe that the most ruinous project they can offer is intended for our good, as it happened in the case so often mentioned. For the poor ignorant people, allured by the appearing convenience in their small dealings, did not discover the serpent in the brass, but were ready, like the Israelites, to offer incense to it; neither could the wisdom of the nation convince them, until some, of good intentions, made the cheat so plain to their sight, that those who run may read. And thus the design was to treat us, in every point, as the Philistines treated Sampson (I mean when he was betrayed by Dalilah) first to put out our eyes, and then bind us with fetters of brass.

I proceed to the last thing I proposed, which was, to show you that all wilful injuries done to the publick, are very great and aggravated sins in the sight of God.

First, It is apparent from Scripture, and most agreeable to reason, that the safety and welfare of nations are under the most peculiar care of God's providence. Thus he promised Abraham to save Sodom, if only ten righteous men could be found in it. Thus the reason which God gave to Jonas for not destroying Nineveh, was, because there were six-score thousand men in that city.

All

Digitized by Google

All government is from God, who is the God of order; and therefore whoever attempts to breed confusion or disturbance among a people, doth his utmost to take the government of the world out of God's hands, and to put it into the hands of the devil, who is the author of confusion. By which it is plain, that no crime, how heinous soever, committed against particular persons, can equal the guilt of him who does injury to the publick.

Secondly, All offenders against their country lie under this grievous difficulty, that it is impossible to obtain a pardon, or make restitution. The bulk of mankind are very quick at resenting injuries, and very slow in forgiving them: and how shall one man be able to obtain the pardon of millions, or repair the injuries he hath done to millions? How shall those, who, by a most destructive fraud, got the whole wealth of our neighbouring kingdom into their hands, be ever able to make a recompense? How will the authors and promoters of that villanous project, for the ruin of this poor country, be able to account with us for the injuries they have already done, although they should no farther succeed? The deplorable case of such wretches must entirely be left to the unfathomable mercies of God: for those who know the least in religion are not ignorant, that without our utmost endeavours to make restitution to the person injured, and to obtain his pardon, added to a sincere repentance, there is no hope of salvation given in the Gospel.

Lastly, All offences against our own country have this aggravation, that they are ungrateful and unnatural. It is to our country we owe those laws, which protect us in our lives, our liberties, our properties, and

Digitized by Google

and our religion. Our country produced us into the world, and continues to nourish us, so that it is usually called our mother; and there have been examples of great magistrates, who have put their own children to death for endeavouring to betray their country, as if they had attempted the life of their natural parent.

Thus I have briefly shown you how terrible a sin it is to be an enemy to our country, in order to incite you to the contrary virtue, which at this juncture is so highly necessary, when every man's endeavour will be of use. We have hitherto been just able to support ourselves under many hardships; but now the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and nothing but a firm union among us can prevent our utter undoing. This we are obliged to, in duty to our gracious king, as well as to ourselves. Let us therefore preserve that publick spirit, which God hath raised in us for our own temporal interest. For, if this wicked project should succeed, which it cannot do but by our own folly; if we sell ourselves for nought; the merchant, the shopkeeper, the artificer, must fly to the desert with their miserable familie, there to starve, or live upon rapine, or at least exchange their country for one more hospitable than that where they were born.

Thus much I thought it my duty to say to you who are under my care, to warn you against those temporal evils, which may draw the worst of spiritual evils after them; such as heart-burnings, murmurings, discontents, and all manner of wickedness, which a desperate condition of life may tempt men to.

I am sensible that what I have now said will not go very far, being confined to this assembly: but I hope

Digitized by Google

hope it may stir up others of my brethren to exhort their several congregations, after a more effectual manner, to show their love for their country on this important occasion. And this, I am sure, cannot be called meddling in affairs of state.

I pray God protect his most gracious majesty, and this kingdom long under his government; and defend us from all ruinous projectors, deceivers, suborners, perjurers, false accusers, and oppressors; from the virulence of party and faction; and unite us in loyalty to our king, love to our country, and charity to each other. And this we beg, for Jesus Christ's sake: to whom, *&c.*

Digitized by Google

A

PRAYER

FOR

MRS. JOHNSON*.

ALMIGHTY and most gracious Lord God, extend, we beseech thee, thy pity and compassion toward this thy languishing servant: teach her to place her hope and confidence entirely in thee: give her a true sense of the emptiness and vanity of all earthly things: make her truly sensible of all the infirmities of her life past; and grant to her such a true sincere repentance as is not to be repented of. Preserve her, O Lord, in a sound mind and understanding, during this thy visitation; keep her from both the sad extremes of presumption and despair. If thou shalt please to restore her to her former health, give her grace to be ever mindful of that mercy, and to keep those good resolutions she now makes in her sickness; so that no length of time, nor prosperity, may entice her to forget them. Let no thought of her misfortunes distract her mind, and prevent the means toward her recovery, or disturb her in her preparations for a better life. We beseech thee also,

* Stella.

O Lord,

Digitized by Google

O Lord, of thy infinite goodness, to remember the good actions of this thy servant; that the naked she hath clothed, the hungry she hath fed, the sick and the fatherless whom she hath relieved, may be reckoned, according to thy gracious promise, as if they had been done unto thee. Hearken, O Lord, to the prayers offered up by the friends of this thy servant in her behalf, and especially those now made by us unto thee. Give thy blessing to those endeavours used for her recovery; but take from her all violent desire either of life or death, farther than with resignation to thy holy will. And now, O Lord, we implore thy gracious favour toward us here met together. Grant that the sense of this thy servant's weakness may add strength to our faith; that we, considering the infirmities of our nature, and the uncertainty of life, may, by this example, be drawn to repentance, before it shall please thee to visit us in the like manner. Accept these prayers, we beseech Thee, for the sake of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord; who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God world without end. Amen.

Digitized by Google

A

PRAYER

USED BY THE DEAN FOR

MRS. JOHNSON IN HER LAST SICKNESS.

WRITTEN OCTOBER 17, 1727.

MOST merciful Father, accept our humblest prayers in behalf of this thy languishing servant: forgive the sins, the frailties and infirmities of her life past. Accept the good deeds she hath done in such a manner, that at whatever time thou shalt please to call her, she may be received into everlasting habitations. Give her grace to continue sincerely thankful to thee for the many favours thou hast bestowed upon her, the ability and inclination and practice to do good, and those virtues, which have procured the esteem and love of her friends, and a most unspotted name in the world. O God, thou dispensest thy blessings and thy punishments as it becometh infinite justice and mercy: and since it was thy pleasure to afflict her with a long, constant, weakly state of health, make her truly sensible, that it was for very wise ends, and was largely made up to her in other blessings more valuable and less common. Continue to her, O Lord, that firmness and constancy of mind, wherewith thou hast most graciously endowed her, together

Digitized by Google

together with that contempt of worldly things and vanities, that she hath shown in the whole conduct of her life. O allpowerful Being, the least motion of whose will can create or destroy a world; pity us, the mournful friends of thy distressed servant, who sink under the weight of her present condition, and the fear of losing the most valuable of our friends: restore her to us, O Lord, if it be thy gracious will, or inspire us with constancy and resignation, to support ourselves under so heavy an affliction. Restore her, O Lord, for the sake of those poor, who by losing her will be desolate; and those sick who will not only want her bounty, but her care and tending; or else, in thy mercy, raise up some other in her place with equal disposition, and better abilities. Lessen, O Lord, we beseech thee, her bodily pains, or give her a double strength of mind to support them. And if thou wilt soon take her to thyself, turn our thoughts rather upon that felicity, which we hope she shall enjoy, than upon that unspeakable loss we shall endure. Let her memory be ever dear unto us; and the example of her many virtues, as far as human infirmity will admit, our constant imitation. Accept, O Lord, these prayers poured from the very bottom of our hearts, in thy mercy, and for the merits of our blessed Saviour. Amen.

Digitized by Google

ANOTHER,

WRITTEN NOVEMBER 6, 1727.

O MERCIFUL Father, who never afflictest thy children, but for their own good, and with justice, over which thy mercy always prevaileth, either to turn them to repentance, or to punish them in the present life, in order to reward them in a better; take pity, we beseech thee, upon this thy poor afflicted servant, languishing so long and so grievously under the weight of thy hand. Give her strength, O Lord, to support her weakness; and patience to endure her pains, without repining at thy correction. Forgive every rash and inconsiderate expression, which her anguish may at any time force from her tongue, while her heart continueth in an entire submission to thy will. Suppress in her, O Lord, all eager desires of life, and lessen her fears of death, by inspiring into her an humble, yet assured hope of thy mercy. Give her a sincere repentance for all her transgressions and omissions, and a firm resolution to pass the remainder of her life in endeavouring to her utmost to observe all thy precepts. We beseech thee likewise to compose her thoughts; and preserve to her the use of her memory and reason, during the course of her sickness. Give her a true conception of the vanity, folly, and insignificancy of all human things; and strengthen her so as to beget in her a sincere love of thee in the midst of her sufferings.

Accept,

Digitized by Google

Accept, and impute all her good deeds, and forgive her all those offences against thee, which she hath sincerely repented of, or through the frailty of memory hath forgot. And now, O Lord, we turn to thee in behalf of ourselves, and the rest of her sorrowful friends. Let not our grief afflict her mind, and thereby have an ill effect on her present distemper. Forgive the sorrow and weakness of those among us, who sink under the grief and terrour of losing so dear and useful a friend. Accept and pardon our most earnest prayers and wishes for her longer continuance in this evil world, to do what thou art pleased to call thy service, and is only her bounden duty; that she may be still a comfort to us, and to all others, who will want the benefit of her conversation, her advice, her good offices, or her charity. And since thou hast promised, that, where two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt be in the midst of them, to grant their request; O gracious Lord, grant to us who are here met in thy name, that those requests, which in the utmost sincerity and earnestness of our hearts we have now made in behalf of this thy distressed servant, and of ourselves, may effectually be answered; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Digitized by Google

THOUGHTS

ON

RELIGION*.

I AM in all opinions to believe according to my own impartial reason; which I am bound to inform and improve, as far as my capacities and opportunities will permit.

It may be prudent in me to act sometimes by other men's reason; but I can think only by my own.

If another man's reason fully convinces me, it becomes my own reason.

To say a man is bound to believe, is neither truth, nor sense.

You may force men, by interest or punishment to say or swear they believe, and to act as if they believed; you can go no farther.

Every man, as a member of the commonwealth, ought to be content with the possession of his own opinion in private, without perplexing his neighbour, or disturbing the publick.

Violent zeal for truth, has a hundred to one odds, to be either petulancy, ambition, or pride.

There is a degree of corruption, wherein some nations, as bad as the world is, will proceed to an

* See remarks on this treatise, Gent. Mag. vol. xxxv, p. 372.

amend-

Digitized by Google

amendment; till which time, particular men should be quiet.

To remove opinions fundamental in religion, is impossible, and the attempt wicked, whether those opinions be true or false; unless your avowed design be to abolish that religion altogether. So, for instance, in the famous doctrine of Christ's divinity, which has been universally received by all bodies of Christians, since the condemnation of Arianism under Constantine and his successors: wherefore the proceedings of the Socinians are both vain and unwarrantable; because they will be never able to advance their own opinion, or meet any other success than breeding doubts and disturbances in the world—*Qui ratione suâ disturbant mœnia mundi.*

The want of belief is a defect that ought to be concealed, when it cannot be overcome.

The Christian religion, in the most early times, was proposed to the Jews and heathens without the article of Christ's divinity; which, I remember, Erasmus accounts for, by its being too strong a meat for babes. Perhaps, if it were now softened by the Chinese missionaries, the conversion of those infidels would be less difficult: and we find, by the Alcoran, it is the great stumbling block of the Mahometans. But, in a country already Christian, to bring so fundamental a point of faith into debate, can have no consequences that are not pernicious to morals and publick peace.

I have been often offended to find St. Paul's allegories, and other figures of Grecian eloquence, converted by divines into articles of faith.

God's mercy is over all his works; but divines of all sorts lessen that mercy too much.

Digitized by Google

I look upon myself, in the capacity of a clergyman, to be one appointed by Providence for defending a post assigned me, and for gaining over as many enemies as I can. Although I think my cause is just; yet one great motive is my submitting to the pleasure of Providence, and to the laws of my country.

I am not answerable to God for the doubts that arise in my own breast, since they are the consequence of that reason which he has planted in me; if I take care to conceal those doubts from others, if I use my best endeavours to subdue them, and if they have no influence on the conduct of my life.

I believe that thousands of men would be orthodox enough in certain points, if divines had not been too curious, or too narrow, in reducing orthodoxy within the compass of subtleties, niceties, and distinctions, with little warrant from Scripture, and less from reason or good policy.

I never saw, heard, nor read, that the clergy were beloved in any nation where Christianity was the religion of the country. Nothing can render them popular, but some degree of persecution.

Those fine gentlemen, who affect the humour of railing at the clergy, are, I think, bound in honour to turn parsons themselves; and show us better examples.

Miserable mortals! can we contribute to the honour and glory of God? I could wish that expression were struck out of our prayer books.

Liberty of conscience, properly speaking, is no more than the liberty of possessing our own thoughts and opinions, which every man enjoys without fear of

Digitized by Google

of the magistrate: but how far he shall publickly act in pursuance of those opinions, is to be regulated by the laws of the country. Perhaps, in my own thoughts, I prefer a well-instituted commonwealth before a monarchy; and I know several others of the same opinion. Now, if, upon this pretence, I should insist upon liberty of conscience, form conventicles of republicans, and print books preferring that government, and condemning what is established, the magistrate would, with great justice, hang me and my disciples. It is the same case in religion, although not so avowed; where liberty of conscience, under the present acceptation, equally produces revolutions, or at least convulsions and disturbances, in a state; which politicians would see well enough, if their eyes were not blinded by faction, and of which these kingdoms, as well as France, Sweden, and other countries, are flaming instances. Cromwell's notion upon this article was natural and right; when, upon the surrender of a town in Ireland, the popish governor insisted upon an article for liberty of conscience. Cromwell said, "He meddled with no "man's conscience; but if, by liberty of conscience "the governor meant the liberty of the mass, he had "express orders from the parliament of England "against admitting any such liberty at all."

It is impossible that any thing so natural, so necessary, and so universal as death, should ever have been designed by Providence as an evil to mankind.

Although reason were intended by Providence to govern our passions; yet it seems that in two points of the greatest moment to the being and continuance of

Digitized by Google

of the world, God has intended our passions to prevail over reason. The first is, the propagation of our species; since no wise man ever married from the dictates of reason. The other is, the love of life; which, from the dictates of reason, every man would despise, and wish it at an end, or that it never had a beginning.

Digitized by Google

MR. COLLINS'S

DISCOURSE OF

FREETHINKING;

PUT INTO PLAIN ENGLISH,

BY WAY OF ABSTRACT,

FOR THE USE OF THE POOR.

BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

FIRST PRINTED IN 1713.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION.

OUR party * having failed, by all their political arguments, to reestablish their power; the wise leaders have determined that the last and principal remedy should be made use of, for opening the eyes of this blinded nation; and that a short, but perfect system of their divinity should be published, to which we are all of us ready to subscribe, and which we lay down as a model, bearing a close analogy to our schemes in religion. Crafty designing men, that they might keep the world in awe, have, in their several forms of government, placed a supreme power on earth, to keep humankind in fear of being hanged; and a Supreme Power in Heaven, for fear of being damned. In order to cure men's apprehensions of the former, several of our learned members have written many profound treatises on Anarchy; but a brief complete body of Atheology seemed yet wanting, till this irrefragable Discourse appeared. However, it so happens, that our ablest brethren, in their elaborate disquisitions upon this subject, have written with so much caution, that ignorant unbelievers have edified very little by them. I grant that those daring spirits, who first adventured to write against the direct rules of the Gospel, the current of antiquity, the religion of

* It is obvious that Dr. Swift is here writing in the assumed character of a whig; and if in some few passages he may appear to write too freely, the blame must revert on the author whose sentiments he exhibits.

the

Digitized by Google

the magistrate, and the laws of the land, had some measures to keep; and particularly when they railed at religion, were in the right to use little artful disguises, by which a jury could only find them guilty of abusing heathenism or popery. But the mystery is now revealed, that there is no such thing as mystery or revelation; and though our friends are out of place and power, yet we may have so much confidence in the present ministry, to be secure, that those who suffer so many free speeches against their sovereign and themselves to pass unpunished, will never resent our expressing the freest thoughts against their religion; but think with Tiberius, that, if there be a God, he is able enough to revenge any injuries done to himself, without expecting the civil power to interpose.

By these reflections I was brought to think, that the most ingenious author of the Discourse upon Freethinking, in a letter to Somebody, esq., although he has used less reserve than any of his predecessors, might yet have been more free and open. I considered, that several well-willers to infidelity, might be discouraged by a show of logick, and a multiplicity of quotations, scattered through his book; which, to understandings of that size, might carry an appearance of something like book-learning, and consequently fright them from reading for their improvement. I could see no reason why these great discoveries should be hid from our youth of quality, who frequent White's and Tom's; why they should not be adapted to the capacities of the Kit-Cat and Hanover clubs, who might then be able to read lectures on them to their several toasts: and it will be allowed on all hands, that nothing can sooner help to restore our abdicated cause, than

Digitized by Google

than a firm universal belief of the principles laid down by this sublime author: for I am sensible that nothing would more contribute to "the continuance of the "war," and the restoration of the late ministry, than to have the doctrines delivered in this treatise well infused into the people. I have therefore compiled them into the following Abstract, wherein I have adhered to the very words of our author; only adding some few explanations of my own, where the terms happen to be too learned, and consequently a little beyond the comprehension of those for whom the work was principally intended, I mean the nobility and gentry of our party: after which, I hope, it will be impossible for the malice of a jacobite, highflying, priestridden faction, to misrepresent us. The few additions I have made are for no other use than to help the transition, which could not otherwise be kept in an abstract: but I have not presumed to advance any thing of my own; which, besides, would be needless to an author who has so fully handled and demonstrated every particular. I shall only add, that though this writer, when he speaks of priests, desires chiefly to be understood to mean the English clergy; yet he includes all priests whatsoever, except the ancient and modern heathens, the Turks, quakers, and Socinians.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE LETTER.

SIR,

I SEND you this apology for Freethinking, without the least hopes of doing good, but purely to comply with your request; for those truths which nobody can deny, will do no good to those who deny them. The clergy, who are so impudent to teach the people the doctrines of faith, are all either cunning knaves or mad fools; for none but artificial designing men, and crackbrained enthusiasts, presume to be guides to others in matters of speculation, which all the doctrines of Christianity are; and whoever has a mind to learn the Christian religion, naturally chooses such knaves and fools to teach them. Now the Bible, which contains the precepts of the priests' religion, is the most difficult book in the world to be understood: it requires a thorough knowledge in natural, civil, ecclesiastical history, law, husbandry, sailing, physick, pharmacy, mathematicks, metaphysicks, ethicks, and every thing else that can be named: and every body who believes it ought to understand it, and must do so by force of his own freethinking, without any guide or instructor.

How can a man think at all, if he does not think freely? A man who does not eat and drink freely, does not eat and drink at all. Why may not I be denied the liberty of freeseeing as well as freethinking? Yet nobody pretends that the first is unlawful, for a cat may look on a king; though you be near-sighted, or have weak or sore eyes, or are blind, you may

Digitized by Google

may be a freeseer; you ought to see for yourself, and not trust to a guide to choose the colour of your stockings, or save you from falling into a ditch.

In like manner, there ought to be no restraint at all on thinking freely upon any proposition, however impious or absurd. There is not the least hurt in the wickedest thoughts, provided they be free; nor in telling those thoughts to every body, and endeavouring to convince the world of them; for all this is included in the doctrine of freethinking, as I shall plainly show you in what follows: and therefore you are all along to understand the word freethinking in this sense.

If you are apt to be afraid of the devil, think freely of him, and you destroy him and his kingdom. Freethinking has done him more mischief than all the clergy in the world ever could do: they believe in the devil, they have an interest in him, and therefore are the great supports of his kingdom. The devil was in the States General before they began to be freethinkers: for England and Holland were formerly the Christian territories of the devil. I told you how he left Holland; and freethinking and the revolution banished him from England; I defy all the clergy to show me when they ever had such success against him. My meaning is, that to think freely of the devil, is to think there is no devil at all; and he that thinks so, the devil is in him if he be afraid of the devil.

But, within these two or three years, the devil has come into England again; and Dr. Sacheverell has given him commission to appear in the shape of a cat, and carry old women about upon broomsticks: and the devil has now so many "ministers ordained to his service," that they have rendered freethinking odious,

Digitized by Google

and nothing but the second coming of Christ can restore it.

The priests tell me, I am to believe the Bible; but freethinking tells me otherwise in many particulars. The Bible says, the Jews were a nation favoured by God; but I, who am a freethinker, say, that cannot be, because the Jews lived in a corner of the earth, and freethinking makes it clear that those who live in corners cannot be favourites of God. The New Testament all along asserts the truth of Christianity; but freethinking denies it: because Christianity was communicated but to a few: and whatever is communicated but to a few, cannot be true; for that is like whispering, and the proverb says, "that there is no "whispering without lying."

Here is a society in London for propagating freethinking throughout the world, encouraged and supported by the queen and many others. You say, perhaps, it is for propagating the Gospel. Do you think the missionaries we send will tell the heathens that they must not think freely? No, surely; why then, it is manifest, those missionaries must be freethinkers, and make the heathens so too. But why should not the king of Siam, whose religion is heathenism and idolatry, send over a parcel of his priests to convert us to his church, as well as we send missionaries there? Both projects are exactly of a piece, and equally reasonable; and if those heathen priests were here, it would be our duty to hearken to them, and think freely whether they may not be in the right rather than we. I heartily wish a detachment of such divines as Dr. Atterbury, Dr. Smallridge, Dr. Swift, Dr. Sacheverell, and some others, were sent every year to the farthest part of the heathen world, and that

Digitized by Google

that we had a cargo of their priests in return, who would spread freethinking among us. Then the war would go on, the late ministry be restored, and faction cease; which our priests inflame by haranguing upon texts, and falsely call that "preaching the Gospel."

I have another project in my head, which ought to be put in execution, in order to make us freethinkers. It is a great hardship and injustice, that our priests must not be disturbed while they are prating in their pulpit. For example: why should not William Penn the quaker, or any anabaptist, papist, Muggletonian, Jew, or sweetsinger, have liberty to come into St. Paul's church, in the midst of divine service, and endeavour to convert first the aldermen, then the preacher, and singing-men? or pray, why might not poor Mr. Whiston, who denies the divinity of Christ, be allowed to come into the lower house of convocation, and convert the clergy? But, alas! we are overrun with such false notions, that, if Penn or Whiston should do their duty, they would be reckoned fanaticks, and disturbers of the holy synod; although they have as good a title to it as St. Paul had to go into the synagogues of the Jews; and their authority is full as divine as his.

Christ himself commands us to be freethinkers; for he bids us search the Scriptures, and take heed what and whom we hear: by which he plainly warns us, not to believe our bishops and clergy; for Jesus Christ, when he considered that all the Jewish and heathen priests, whose religion he came to abolish, were his enemies, rightly concluded that those appointed by him to preach his own Gospel would probably be so too; and could not be secure that any set of priests, of the faith he delivered, would ever be otherwise:

Digitized by Google

therefore it is fully demonstrated that the clergy of the church of England are mortal enemies to Christ, and ought not to be believed.

But, without the privilege of freethinking, how is it possible to know which is the right Scripture? Here are perhaps twenty sorts of Scriptures in the several parts of the world, and every set of priests contends that their Scripture is the true one. The Indian bramins have a book of Scripture called the Shaster; the Persees their Zundivastaw; the bonzes in China have theirs, written by the disciples of Fo-he, whom they call "God and Saviour of the world, "who was born to teach the way of salvation, and to "give satisfaction for all men's sins:" which, you see, is directly the same with what our priests pretend of Christ. And must we not think freely, to find out which are in the right, whether the bishops, or the bonzes? But the talapoins, or heathen clergy of Siam, approach yet nearer to the system of our priests; they have a book of Scripture written by Sommonocodam, who, the Siamese say, was "born "of a virgin," and was "the God expected by the "universe;" just as our priests tell us, that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and was the Messiah so long expected. The Turkish priests, or dervises, have their Scripture which they call the Alcoran. The Jews have the Old Testament for their Scripture, and the Christians have both the Old and the New. Now, among all these Scriptures, there cannot above one be right; and how is it possible to know which is that, without reading them all, and then thinking freely, every one of us for ourselves, without following the advice or instruction of any guide, before we venture to choose? The parliament ought

Digitized by Google

ought to be at the charge of finding a sufficient number of these Scriptures, for every one of her majesty's subjects; for, there are twenty to one against us, that we may be in the wrong: but a great deal of freethinking will at last set us all right, and every one will adhere to the Scripture he likes best; by which means, religion, peace, and wealth, will be for ever secured in her majesty's realms.

And it is the more necessary that the good people of England should have liberty to choose some other Scripture, because all Christian priests differ so much about the copies of theirs, and about the various readings of the several manuscripts, which quite destroys the authority of the Bible: for what authority can a book pretend to, where there are various readings? And for this reason, it is manifest that no man can know the opinions of Aristotle or Plato, or believe the facts related by Thucydides or Livy, or be pleased with the poetry of Homer and Virgil, all which books are utterly useless, upon account of their various readings. Some books of Scripture are said to be lost, and this utterly destroys the credit of those that are left: some we reject, which the Africans and Copticks receive; and why may we not think freely, and reject the rest? Some think the Scriptures wholly inspired, some partly; and some not at all. Now this is just the very case of the bramins, Persees, bonzes, talapoins, dervises, rabbis, and all other priests, who build their religion upon books, as our priests do upon their Bibles. They all equally differ about the copies, various readings and inspirations, of their several Scriptures; and God knows which are in the right: freethinking alone can determine it.

Digitized by Google

It would be endless to show in how many particulars the priests of the heathen and Christian churches, differ about the meaning even of those Scriptures which they universally receive as sacred. But, to avoid prolixity, I shall confine myself to the different opinions among the priests of the church of England; and here only give you a specimen, because even these are too many to be enumerated.

I have found out a bishop (though indeed his opinions are condemned by all his brethren) who allows the Scriptures to be so difficult, that God has left them rather as a trial of our industry, than a repository of our faith, and furniture of creeds and articles of belief; with several other admirable schemes of freethinking, which you may consult at your leisure.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the most fundamental point of the whole Christian religion. Nothing is more easy to a freethinker: yet what different notions of it do the English priests pretend to deduce from Scripture, explaining it by "specifick unities, eternal "modes of subsistence," and the like unintelligible jargon! Nay, it is a question whether this doctrine be fundamental or not; for though Dr. South and bishop Bull affirm it, yet bishop Taylor and Dr. Wallis deny it. And that excellent freethinking prelate bishop Taylor observes, that Athanasius's example was followed with too much greediness: by which means it has happened, that the greater number of our priests are in that sentiment, and think it necessary to believe the Trinity, and incarnation of Christ.

Our priests likewise dispute several circumstances about the resurrection of the dead, the nature of our bodies after the resurrection, and in what manner they shall be united to our souls. They also attack one

Digitized by Google

one another " very weakly, with great vigour," about predestination. And it is certainly true (for bishop Taylor and Mr. Whiston the Socinian say so) that all churches in prosperity alter their doctrines every age, and are neither satisfied with themselves nor their own confessions; neither does any clergyman of sense believe the Thirty-nine Articles.

Our priests differ about the eternity of Hell torments. The famous Dr. Henry More, and the most pious and rational of all priests Dr. Tillotson (both freethinkers) believe them to be not eternal. They differ about keeping the sabbath, the divine right of episcopacy, and the doctrine of original sin; which is the foundation of the whole Christian religion; for, if men are not liable to be damned for Adam's sin, the Christian religion is an imposture: yet this is now disputed among them; so is lay baptism: so was formerly the lawfulness of usury; but now the priests are common stockjobbers, attorneys, and scriveners. In short, there is no end of disputing among priests; and therefore I conclude, that there ought to be no such thing in the world as priests, teachers, or guides, for instructing ignorant people in religion; but that every man ought to think freely for himself.

I will tell you my meaning in all this. The priests dispute every point in the Christian religion, as well as almost every text in the Bible; and the force of my argument lies here, that whatever point is disputed by one or two divines, however condemned by the church, not only that particular point, but the whole article to which it relates, may lawfully be received or rejected by any freethinker. For instance, suppose More and Tillotson deny the eternity of Hell torments, a freethinker may deny all future punishments

Digitized by Google

whatsoever. The priests dispute about explaining the Trinity; therefore a freethinker may reject one or two, or the whole three persons; at least, he may reject Christianity, because the Trinity is the most fundamental doctrine of that religion. So I affirm original sin, and that men are now liable to be damned for Adam's sin, to be the foundation of the whole Christian religion; but this point was formerly, and is now, disputed: therefore a freethinker may deny the whole. And I cannot help giving you one farther direction, how I insinuate all along, that the wisest freethinking priests, whom you may distinguish by the epithets I bestow on them, were those who differed most from the generality of their brethren.

But, besides, the conduct of our priests in many other points makes freethinking unavoidable; for, some of them own, that the doctrines of the church are contradictory to one another, as well as to reason; which I thus prove: Dr. Sacheverell says, in his speech at his trial, "That, by abandoning passive "obedience, we must render ourselves the most in- "consistent church in the world;" *ergo*, there must have been a great many inconsistencies and contradictory doctrines in the church before. Dr. South describes the incarnation of Christ as an astonishing mystery, impossible to be conceived by man's reason; *ergo*, it is contradictory to itself, and to reason, and ought to be exploded by all freethinkers.

Another instance of the priests' conduct, which multiplies freethinkers, is their acknowledgment of abuses, defects, and false doctrines, in the church; particularly that of eating black pudding, which is so plainly forbid in the Old and New Testament, that I wonder those who pretend to believe a syllable in either

Digitized by Google

either will presume to taste it. Why should I mention the want of discipline, and of a sideboard at the altar, with complaints of other great abuses and defects made by some of the priests, which no man can think on without freethinking, and consequently rejecting Christianity?

When I see an honest freethinking bishop endeavour to destroy the power and privileges of the church, and Dr. Atterbury angry with him for it, and calling it "dirty work;" what can I conclude, by virtue of being a freethinker, but that Christianity is all a cheat.

Mr. Whiston has published several tracts, wherein he absolutely denies the divinity of Christ. A bishop tells him, "Sir, in any matter where you have the "church's judgment against you, you should be care-"ful not to break the peace of the church, by writing "against it, though you are sure you are in the right." Now my opinion is directly contrary; and I affirm, that if ten thousand freethinkers thought differently from the received doctrine, and from each other, they would be all in duty bound to publish their thoughts, provided they were all sure of being in the right, though it broke the peace of the church and state ten thousand times.

And here I must take leave to tell you, although you cannot but have perceived it from what I have already said, and shall be still more amply convinced by what is to follow, that freethinking signifies nothing, without freespeaking and freewriting. It is the indispensable duty of a freethinker, to endeavour forcing all the world to think as he does, and by that means make them freethinkers too. You are also to understand, that I allow no man to be a free-

thinker

Digitized by Google

thinker, any farther than as he differs from the received doctrines of religion. Where a man falls in, though by perfect chance, with what is generally believed, he is in that point a confined and limited thinker; and you shall see by and by, that I celebrate those for the noblest freethinkers in every age, who differed from the religion of their countries in the most fundamental points, and especially in those which bear any analogy to the chief fundamentals of religion among us.

Another trick of the priests is, to charge all men with atheism, who have more wit than themselves; which therefore I expect will be my case for writing this discourse. This is what makes them so implacable against Mr. Gildon, Dr. Tindal, Mr. Toland, and myself; and when they call us wits atheists, it provokes us to be freethinkers.

Again: the priests cannot agree when their Scripture was written. They differ about the number of canonical books, and the various readings. Now those few among us who understand Latin, are careful to tell this to our disciples, who presently fall a freethinking, that the Bible is a book not to be depended upon in any thing at all.

There is another thing, that mightily spreads freethinking, which I believe you would hardly guess. The priests have got a way of late of writing books against freethinking; I mean, treatises in dialogue, where they introduce atheists, deists, scepticks, and Socinians, offering their several arguments. Now these freethinkers are too hard for the priests themselves in their own books. And how can it be otherwise? For, if the arguments usually offered by atheists are fairly represented in these books, they must

Digitized by Google

must needs convert every body that reads them; because atheists, deists, scepticks, and Socinians, have certainly better arguments to maintain their opinions, than any the priests can produce to maintain the contrary.

Mr. Creech, a priest, translated Lucretius into English, which is a complete system of atheism; and several young students, who were afterward priests, wrote verses in praise of this translation. The arguments against Providence in that book are so strong, that they have added mightily to the number of freethinkers.

Why should I mention the pious cheats of the priests, who in the New Testament translate the word *ecclesia* sometimes the *church*, and sometimes the *congregation*; and *episcopus*, sometimes a *bishop*, and sometimes an *overseer?* A priest, translating a book, left out a whole passage that reflected on the king, by which he was an enemy to political freethinking, a most considerable branch of our system. Another priest, translating a book of travels, left out a lying miracle, out of mere malice, to conceal an argument for freethinking. In short, these frauds are very common in all books which are published by priests. But, however, I love to excuse them whenever I can: and as to this accusation, they may plead the authority of the ancient fathers of the church, for forgery, corruption, and mangling authors, with more reason than for any of their articles of faith. St. Jerom, St. Hilary, Eusebius Vercellensis, Victorinus, and several others, were all guilty of arrant forgery and corruption: for, when they translated the works of several freethinkers, whom they called hereticks, they omitted all their heresies or freethinkings, and had the impudence to own it to the world.

From

Digitized by Google

From these many notorious instances of the priests' conduct, I conclude they are not to be relied on in any one thing relating to religion; but that every man must think freely for himself.

But to this it may be objected, that the bulk of mankind is as well qualified for flying as thinking; and if every man thought it his duty to think freely, and trouble his neighbour with his thoughts (which is an essential part of freethinking) it would make wild work in the world. I answer; whoever cannot think freely, may let it alone if he pleases, by virtue of his right to think freely; that is to say, if such a man freely thinks that he cannot think freely, of which every man is a sufficient judge, why then he need not think freely, unless he thinks fit.

Besides, if the bulk of mankind cannot think freely in matters of speculation, as the being of a God, the immortality of the soul, &c. why then, freethinking is indeed no duty: but then the priests must allow, that men are not concerned to believe whether there is a God or not. But still those who are disposed to think freely, may think freely if they please.

It is again objected, that freethinking will produce endless divisions in opinion, and by consequence disorder society. To which I answer,

When every single man comes to have a different opinion every day from the whole world, and from himself, by virtue of freethinking, and thinks it his duty to convert every man to his own freethinking, as all we freethinkers do; how can that possibly create so great a diversity of opinions, as to have a set of priests agree among themselves to teach the same opinions in their several parishes to all who will come to hear them? Besides, if all people were of the same opinion,

Digitized by Google

opinion, the remedy would be worse than the disease; I will tell you the reason some other time.

Besides, difference in opinion, especially in matters of great moment, breeds no confusion at all. Witness papist and protestant, roundhead and cavalier, and whig and tory, now among us. I observe, the Turkish empire is more at peace within itself, than Christian princes are with one another. Those noble Turkish virtues of charity and toleration are what contribute chiefly to the flourishing state of that happy monarchy. There Christians and Jews are tolerated, and live at ease, if they can hold their tongues and think freely, provided they never set foot within the mosques, nor write against Mahomet. A few plunderings now and then by the janissaries are all they have to fear.

It is objected, that by freethinking, men will think themselves into atheism; and indeed I have allowed all along, that atheistical books convert men to freethinking, But suppose that to be true; I can bring you two divines, who affirm superstition and enthusiasm to be worse than atheism, and more mischievous to society: and in short it is necessary that the bulk of the people should be atheists or superstitious.

It is objected, that priests ought to be relied on by the people, as lawyers and physicians, because it is their faculty. I answer, It is true, a man who is no lawyer, is not suffered to plead for himself. But every man may be his own quack if he pleases, and he only ventures his life; but in the other case, the priest tells him he must be damned: therefore do not trust the priest, but think freely for yourself; and if you happen to think there is no Hell, there certainly is none,

Digitized by Google

none, and consequently you cannot be damned. I answer farther, that wherever there is no lawyer, physician, or priest, that country is paradise. Besides, all priests (except the orthodox, and those are not ours, nor any that I know) are hired by the publick to lead men into mischief: but lawyers and physicians are not; you hire them yourself.

It is objected (by priests, no doubt, but I have forgot their names) that false speculations are necessary to be imposed upon men, in order to assist the magistrate in keeping the peace; and that men ought therefore to be deceived, like children, for their own good. I answer, That zeal for imposing speculations, whether true or false (under which name of speculations I include all opinions of religion, as the belief of a God, providence, immortality of the soul, future rewards and punishments, &c.) has done more hurt, than it is possible for religion to do good. It puts us to the charge of maintaining ten thousand priests in England, which is a burden upon society never felt on any other occasion: and a greater evil to the publick, than if these ecclesiasticks were only employed in the most innocent offices of life, which I take to be eating and drinking. Now if you offer to impose any thing on mankind beside what relates to moral duties, as to pay your debts, not pick pockets, nor commit murder, and the like; that is to say, if, beside this, you oblige them to believe in God and Jesus Christ, what you add to their faith, will take just so much off from their morality. By this argument, it is manifest that a perfect moral man must be a perfect atheist; every inch of religion he gets, loses him an inch of morality: for there is a certain *quantum* belongs to every man, of which there is nothing to spare. This is clear from

Digitized by Google

from the common practice of all our priests: they never once preach to you, to love your neighbour, to be just in your dealings, or to be sober and temperate. The streets of London are full of common whores, publickly tolerated in their wickedness; yet the priests make no complaints against this enormity, either from the pulpit or the press: I can affirm, that neither you nor I, sir, have ever heard one sermon against whoring since we were boys. No, the priests allow all these vices, and love us the better for them, provided we will promise not "to harangue upon a "text," nor to sprinkle a little water in a child's face, which they call baptizing, and would engross it all to themselves.

Besides, the priests engage all the rogues, villains, and fools, in their party, in order to make it as large as they can: by this means they seduced Constantine the Great over to their religion, who was the first Christian emperor, and so horrible a villain, that the heathen priests told him they could not expiate his crimes in their church; so he was at a loss to know what to do, till an Ægyptian bishop assured him that there was no villany so great, but was to be expiated by the sacraments of the Christian religion: upon which he became a Christian, and to him that religion owes its first settlement.

It is objected, that freethinkers themselves are the most infamous, wicked, and senseless, of all mankind.

I answer, first, we say the same of priests and other believers. But the truth is, men of all sects are equally good and bad; for no religion whatsoever contributes in the least to mend men's lives.

I answer, secondly, that freethinkers use their under-

Digitized by Google

understanding; but those who have religion, do not: therefore the first have more understanding than the others; witness Toland, Tindal, Gildon, Clendon, Coward, and myself. For, use legs, and have legs.

I answer, thirdly, that freethinkers are the most virtuous persons in the world; for all freethinkers must certainly differ from the priests, and from nine hundred ninety-nine of a thousand of those among whom they live; and are therefore virtuous of course, because every body hates them.

I answer, fourthly, that the most virtuous people in all ages have been freethinkers; of which I shall produce several instances.

Socrates was a freethinker; for he disbelieved the gods of his country, and the common creeds about them, and declared his dislike when he heard men attribute "repentance, anger, and other passions "to the gods, and talk of wars and battles in Heaven, "and of the gods getting women with child," and such like fabulous and blasphemous stories. I pick out these particulars, because they are the very same with what the priests have in their Bibles, where repentance and anger are attributed to God; where it is said, there was "war in Heaven;" and that "the "Virgin Mary was with child by the Holy Ghost," whom the priests call God; all fabulous and blasphemous stories. Now I affirm Socrates to have been a true Christian. You will ask perhaps how that can be, since he lived three or four hundred years before Christ? I answer, with Justin Martyr, that Christ is nothing else but reason; and I hope you do not think Socrates lived before reason. Now, this true Christian Socrates never made notions, speculations, or mysteries, any part of his religion; but demon-

Digitized by Google

demonstrated all men to be fools who troubled themselves with inquiries into heavenly things. Lastly, it is plain that Socrates was a freethinker, because he was calumniated for an atheist, as freethinkers generally are, only because he was an enemy to all speculations and inquiries into heavenly things. For I argue thus, that, if I never trouble myself to think whether there be a God or not, and forbid others to do it, I am a freethinker, but not an atheist.

Plato was a freethinker; and his notions are so like some in the Gospel, that a heathen charged Christ with borrowing his doctrine from Plato. But Origen defends Christ very well against this charge, by saying he did not understand Greek, and therefore could not borrow his doctrines from Plato. However, their two religions agreed so well, that it was common for Christians to turn Platonists, and Platonists Christians. When the Christians found out this, one of their zealous priests (worse than any atheist) forged several things under Plato's name, but conformable to Christianity, by which the heathens were fraudulently converted.

Epicurus was the greatest of all freethinkers, and consequently the most virtuous man in the world. His opinions in religion were the most complete system of atheism that ever appeared. Christians ought to have the greatest veneration for him, because he taught a higher point of virtue than Christ; I mean, the virtue of friendship, which, in the sense we usually understand it, is not so much as named in the New Testament.

Plutarch was a freethinker, notwithstanding his being a priest, but indeed he was a heathen priest. His freethinking appears by showing the innocence

Digitized by Google

of atheism (which at worst is only false reasoning) and the mischiefs of superstition; and he explains what superstition is, by calling it a conceit of immortal ills after death, the opinion of Hell torments, dreadful aspects, doleful groans, and the like. He is likewise very satirical upon the publick forms of devotion in his own country, a qualification absolutely necessary to a freethinker; yet those forms which he ridicules, are the very same that now pass for true worship in almost all countries: I am sure, some of them do so in ours; such as abject looks, distortions, wry faces, beggarly tones, humiliation and contrition.

Varro, the most learned among the Romans, was a freethinker; for he said, the heathen divinity contained many fables below the dignity of immortal beings: such for instance as Gods begotten and proceeding from other Gods. These two words I desire you will particularly remark, because they are the very terms made use of by our priests in their doctrine of the Trinity. He says likewise, that there are many things false in religion, and so say all freethinkers; but then he adds, "which the vulgar ought "not to know, but it is expedient they should believe." In this last he indeed discovers the whole secret of a statesman and politician, by denying the vulgar the privilege of freethinking; and here I differ from him. However, it is manifest from hence, that the Trinity was an invention of statesmen and politicians.

The grave and wise Cato the censor will for ever live in that noble freethinking saying—"I wonder," said he, "how one of our priests can forbear laughing "when he sees another!" For, contempt of priests is another grand characteristick of a freethinker. This shows

Digitized by Google

shows that Cato understood the whole mystery of the Roman "religion as by law established." I beg you, sir, not to overlook these last words, "religion as by "law established." I translate *haruspex* into the general word, *priest*. Thus I apply the sentence to our priests in England; and, when Dr. Smallridge sees Dr. Atterbury, I wonder how either of them can forbear laughing at the cheat they put upon the people, by making them believe their "religion as "by law established."

Cicero, that consummate philosopher and noble patriot, though he was a priest, and consequently more likely to be a knave, gave the greatest proofs of his freethinking. First, he professed the sceptick philosophy, which doubts of every thing. Then, he wrote two treatises; in the first, he shows the weakness of the stoicks arguments for the being of the Gods: in the latter he has destroyed the whole revealed religion of the Greeks and Romans; for why should not theirs be a revealed religion as well as that of Christ? Cicero likewise tells us, as his own opinion, that they who study philosophy do not believe there are any Gods: he denies the immortality of the soul, and says, there can be nothing after death.

And because the priests have the impudence to quote Cicero, in their pulpits and pamphlets, against freethinking; I am resolved to disarm them of his authority. You must know, his philosophical works are generally in dialogues, where people are brought in disputing against one another. Now the priests, when they see an argument to prove a God, offered perhaps by a stoick, are such knaves or blockheads, to quote it as if it were Cicero's own: whereas

Digitized by Google

Cicero was so noble a freethinker, that he believed nothing at all of the matter, nor ever shows the least inclination to favour superstition, or the belief of God, and the immortality of the soul; unless what he throws out sometimes to save himself from danger, in his speeches to the Roman mob; whose religion was, however, much more innocent, and less absurd, than that of popery at least: and I could say more—but you understand me.

Seneca was a great freethinker, and had a noble notion of the worship of the Gods, for which our priests would call any man an atheist: he laughs at morning devotions, or worshipping upon sabbath days; he says, God has no need of ministers and servants, because he himself serves mankind. This religious man, like his religious brethren the stoicks, denies the immortality of the soul; and says, all that is feigned to be so terrible in Hell is but a fable: death puts an end to all our misery, &c. Yet the priests were anciently so fond of Seneca, that they forged a correspondence of letters between him and St. Paul.

Solomon himself, whose writings are called "the "word of God," was such a freethinker, that if he were now alive, nothing but his building of churches could have kept our priests from calling him an atheist. He affirms the eternity of the world almost in the same manner with Manilius the heathen philosophical poet, which opinion entirely overthrows the history of the creation by Moses, and all the New Testament: he denies the immortality of the soul, assures us, "that men die like beasts," and "that both go "to one place."

The prophets of the Old Testament were generally freethinkers.

Digitized by Google

freethinkers. You must understand, that their way of learning to prophecy was by musick and drinking. These prophets wrote against the established religion of the Jews (which those people looked upon as the institution of God himself) as if they believed it was all a cheat: that is to say, with as great liberty against the priests and prophets of Israel, as Dr. Tindal did lately against the priests and prophets of our Israel, who has clearly shown them and their religion to be cheats. To prove this, you may read several passages in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Jeremiah, &c. wherein you will find such instances of freethinking, that, if any Englishman had talked so in our days, their opinions would have been registered in Dr. Sacheverell's trial, and in the representation of the lower house of convocation, and produced as so many proofs of the prophaneness, blasphemy, and atheism of the nation; there being nothing more prophane, blasphemous, or atheistical, in those representations, than what these prophets have spoken, whose writings are yet called by our priests "the word of God." And therefore these prophets are as much atheists as myself, or as any of my freethinking brethren whom I lately named to you.

Josephus was a great freethinker. I wish he had chosen a better subject to write on, than those ignorant, barbarous, ridiculous scoundrels the Jews, whom God (if we may believe the priests) thought fit to choose for his own people. I will give you some instances of his freethinking. He says, Cain travelled through several countries, and kept company with rakes and profligate fellows; he corrupted the simplicities of former times, &c. which plainly upposes men before Adam, and consequently that

Digitized by Google

the priests' history of the creation by Moses, is an imposture. He says, the Israelites passing through the Red Sea, was no more than Alexander's passing at the Pamphilian sea; that as for the appearance of God at Mount Sinai, the reader may believe it as he pleases; that Moses persuaded the Jews, he had God for his guide, just as the Greeks pretended they had their laws from Apollo. These are noble strains of freethinking, which the priests know not how to solve, but by thinking as freely: for one of them says, that Josephus wrote this, to make his work acceptable to the heathens, by striking out every thing that was incredible.

Origen, who was the first Christian that had any learning, has left a noble testimony of his freethinking; for a general council has determined him to be damned; which plainly shows he was a freethinker, and was no saint: for, people were only sainted because of their want of learning and excess of zeal: so that all the fathers who are called saints by the priests, were worse than atheists.

Minutius Felix seems to be a true, modern, latitudinarian, freethinking Christian: for he is against altars, churches, publick preaching, and publick assemblies; and likewise against priests; for, he says, there were several great flourishing empires before there were any orders of priests in the world.

Synesius, who had too much learning and too little zeal for a saint, was for some time a great freethinker; he could not believe the resurrection till he was made a bishop, and then pretended to be convinced by a lying miracle.

To come to our own country! My lord Bacon was a great freethinker, when he tells us, "that whatever

Digitized by Google

" ever has the least relation to religion is particularly " liable to suspicion;" by which he seems to suspect all the facts whereon most of the superstitions (that is to say, what the priests call the religions) of the world are grounded. He also prefers atheism before superstition.

Mr. Hobbes was a person of great learning, virtue, and freethinking, except in his high church politicks.

But archbishop Tillotson is the person whom all English freethinkers own as their head; and his virtue is indisputable for this manifest reason, that Dr. Hickes, a priest, calls him an atheist; says, he caused several to turn atheists, and to ridicule the priesthood and religion. These must be allowed to be noble effects of freethinking. This great prelate assures us, that all the duties of the Christian religion, with respect to God, are no other but what natural light prompt men to, except the two sacraments, and praying to God in the name and mediation of Christ. As a priest and prelate, he was obliged to say something of Christianity; but pray observe, sir, how he brings himself off. He justly affirms, that even these things are of less moment than natural duties; and because mothers nursing their children is a natural duty, it is of more moment than the two sacraments, or than praying to God in the name and by the mediation of Christ. This freethinking archbishop could not allow a miracle sufficient to give credit to a prophet, who taught any thing contrary to our natural notions: by which, it is plain, he rejected at once all the mysteries of Christianity.

I could name one and twenty more great men, who were all freethinkers; but that I fear to be tedious: for it is certain that all men of sense depart from the

Digitized by Google

opinions commonly received; and are consequently more or less men of sense, according as they depart more or less from the opinions commonly received: neither can you name an enemy to freethinking, however he be dignified or distinguished, whether archbishop, bishop, priest, or deacon, who has not been either "a crackbrained enthusiast, a diabolical villain, "or a most profound ignorant brute."

Thus, sir, I have endeavoured to execute your commands, and you may print this Letter if you please: but I would have you conceal your name. For my opinion of virtue is, that we ought not to venture doing ourselves harm, by endeavouring to do good.

I am,

Yours, &c.

CON-

Digitized by Google

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE here given the publick a brief, but faithful abstract of this most excellent Essay; wherein I have all along religiously adhered to our author's notions, and generally to his words, without any other addition than that of explaining a few necessary consequences, for the sake of ignorant readers; for, to those who have the least degree of learning, I own, they will be wholly useless. I hope I have not, in any single instance, misrepresented the thoughts of this admirable writer. If I have happened to mistake through inadvertency, I entreat he will condescend to inform me, and point out the place; upon which, I will immediately beg pardon both of him and the world. The design of his piece is to recommend freethinking; and one chief motive is the example of many excellent men who were of that sect. He produces as the principal points of their freethinking; that they denied the being of a God, the torments of Hell, the immortality of the soul, the Trinity, incarnation, the history of the creation by Moses, with many other such "fabulous and blasphemous stories," as he judiciously calls them: and he asserts, that whoever denies the most of these, is the completest freethinker, and consequently the wisest and most virtuous man.

The author, sensible of the prejudices of the age, does not directly affirm himself an atheist; he goes no farther than to pronounce that atheism is the most perfect

Digitized by Google

perfect degree of freethinking; and leaves the reader to form the conclusion. However, he seems to allow, that a man may be a tolerable freethinker, though he does believe a God; provided he utterly rejects "providence, revelation, the Old and New "Testament, future rewards and punishments, the "immortality of the soul," and other the like impossible absurdities. Which mark of superabundant caution, sacrificing truth to the superstition of priests, may perhaps be forgiven, but ought not to be imitated by any who would arrive (even in this author's judgment) at the true perfection of freethinking.

Digitized by Google

A LETTER TO A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT IN IRELAND,

UPON CHOOSING A NEW SPEAKER THERE.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1708.

SIR,

YOU may easily believe I am not at all surprised at what you tell me, since it is but a confirmation of my own conjecture that I sent you last week, and made you my reproaches upon at a venture. It looks exceedingly strange, yet I believe it to be a great truth, that in order to carry a point in your house, the two following circumstances are of great advantage: first, to have an ill cause; and, secondly, to be a minority. For both these circumstances, are extremely apt to invite men, to make them assiduous in their attendance, watchful of opportunities, zealous for gaining over proselytes, and often successful; which

Digitized by Google

which is not to be wondered at, when favour and interest are on the side of their opinion. Whereas, on the contrary, a majority with a good cause are negligent and supine. They think it sufficient to declare themselves upon opinion in favour of their party; but, sailing against the tide of favour and preferment, they are easily scattered and driven back. In short, they want a common principle to cement, and motive to spirit them: for, the bare acting upon a principle from the dictates of a good conscience, or prospect of serving the publick, will not go very far under the present dispositions of mankind. This was amply verified last session of parliament, upon occasion of the money bill, the merits of which I shall not pretend to examine. It is enough, that upon the first news of its transmission hither, in the form in which it afterward appeared, the members, upon discourse with their friends, seemed unanimous against it; I mean those of both parties, except a few, who were looked upon as persons ready to go any lengths prescribed them by the court. Yet, with only a weak canvassing among a very few hands, the bill passed, after a full debate, by a very great majority. Yet, I believe, you will hardly attempt persuading me, or any body else, that one man in ten, of those who changed their language, were moved by reasons any way affecting the merits of the cause, but merely through hope, fear, indolence, or good manners. Nay, I have been assured from good hands, that there was still a number sufficient to make a majority against the bill, if they had not apprehended the other side to be secure; and therefore thought it imprudence, by declaring themselves, to disoblige the government to no purpose.

Reflecting

Digitized by Google

Reflecting upon this, and forty other passages, in the several houses of commons since the Revolution, makes me apt to think, there is nothing a chief governor can be commanded to attempt here, wherein he may not succeed, with a very competent share of address, and with such assistance, as he will always find ready at his devotion. And therefore I repeat what I said at first, that I am not at all surprised at what you tell me. For, if there had been the least spark of publick spirit left, those who wished well to their country, and its constitution in church and state, should, upon the first news of the late speaker's promotion (and you and I know it might have been done a great deal sooner) have immediately gone together, and consulted about the fittest person to succeed him. But, by all I can comprehend, you have been so far from proceeding thus, that it hardly ever came into any of your heads. And the reason you give, is the worst in the world: That none offered themselves, and you knew not whom to pitch upon. It seems, however, the other party was more resolved, or at least not so modest: for, you say, your vote is engaged against your opinion, and several gentlemen in my neighbourhood tell me the same story of themselves. This, I confess, is of an unusual strain, and a good many steps below any condescensions a court will, I hope, ever require from you. I shall not trouble myself to inquire who is the person, for whom you and others are engaged, or whether there be more candidates from that side than one. You tell me nothing of either; and I never thought it worth the question to any body else. But, in so weighty an affair, and against your judgment, I cannot look upon you as irrecoverably determined. There-

Digitized by Google

Therefore I desire you will give me leave to reason with you a little upon the subject; lest your compliance, or inadvertency, should put you upon what you may have cause to repent of, as long as you live.

You know very well, the great business of the high flying whigs, at this juncture, is, to endeavour a repeal of the test clause. You know likewise that the moderate men, both of high and low church, profess to be wholly averse from this design, as thinking it beneath the policy of common gardeners, to cut down the only hedge that shelters from the north. Now I will put the case: If the person to whom you have promised your vote, be one, of whom you have the least apprehension, that he will promote or assent to the repealing of that clause, whether it be decent or proper he should be the mouth of an assembly, whereof a very great majority pretend to abhor his opinion! Can a body, whose mouth and heart must go so contrariwise, ever act with sincerity, or hardly with consistency? Such a man is no proper vehicle to retain or convey the sense of the house, which, in so many points of the greatest moment, will be directly contrary to his. It is full as absurd, as to prefer a man to a bishoprick, who denies revealed religion. But it may possibly be a great deal worse. What if the person, you design to vote into that important post, should not only be a declared enemy of the sacramental test, but should prove to be a solicitor, and encourager, or even a penner of addresses to complain of it? Do you think it so indifferent a thing, that a promise of course, the effect of compliance, importunity, shame of refusing, or any the like motive, shall oblige you past the power of retracting?

Perhaps

Digitized by Google

Perhaps you will tell me, as some have already had the weakness, that it is of little importance to either party, to have a speaker of their side, his business being only to take the sense of the house, and report it; that you often, at committees, put an able speaker into the chair, on purpose to prevent him from stopping a bill. Why, if it were no more than this, I believe I should hardly choose even among my footmen, such a one to deliver a message, whose interest and opinion led him to wish it might miscarry. But I remember to have heard colonel Birch of Herefordshire say, "That he was a very sorry speaker, whose "single vote was not better than fifty common ones." I am sure it is reckoned in England, the first great test of the prevalency of either party in the house. Sir Thomas Lyttelton thought that a house of commons with a stinking breath (supposing the speaker to be the mouth) would go near to infect every thing within the walls, and a great deal without. It is the smallest part of an able speaker's business what he performs in the house; at least if he be in with the court, when it is hard to say, how many converts may be made, in a circle of dinners or private cabals. And you and I easily call to mind a gentleman in that station in England, who, by his own arts, and personal credit, was able to draw over a majority, and change the whole power of a prevailing side, in a nice juncture of affairs, and make a parliament expire in one party, who had lived in another.

I am far from an inclination to multiply party causes; but surely the best of us, can with very ill grace make that an objection, who has not been so nice in matters of much less importance. Yet I have heard some persons of both sides gravely deliver themselves in

Digitized by Google

in this manner: "Why should we make the choosing "of a speaker a party cause? Let us fix upon one, "who is well versed in the practices and methods of "parliament." And I believe, there are too many who would talk at the same rate, if the question were not only about abolishing the sacramental test, but the sacrament itself.

But, suppose the principles of the most artful speaker would have no influence, either to obtain, or obstruct any point in parliament; who can answer what effects such a choice may produce without doors? It is obvious how such a matter serves to raise the spirits and hopes of the dissenters, and their high flying advocates: what lengths they run, what conclusions they form, and what hopes they entertain. Do they hear of a new friend in office? that is encouragement enough to practise the city, against the opinion of a majority, into an address to the queen for repealing the sacramental test; or issue out their orders to the next fanatick parson, to furbish up his old sermons, and preach and print new ones directly against episcopacy. I would lay a good wager, that if the choice of a new speaker, succeeds exactly to their liking, we shall see it soon followed by many new attempts, either in the form of pamphlet, sermon, or address, to the same, or perhaps more dangerous purposes.

Supposing the speaker's office to be only an employment of profit and honour, and a step to a better; since it is in your own gift, will you not choose to bestow it upon some person, whose principles the majority of you pretends to approve, if it were only to be sure of a worthy man hereafter, in a high station, on the bench, or at the bar?

I confess

Digitized by Google

I confess, if it were a thing possible to be compassed, it would seem most reasonable, to fill the chair with some person, who would be entirely devoted to neither party: but, since there are so few of that character, and those either unqualified or unfriended, I cannot see how a majority will answer it to their reputation, to be so ill provided of able persons, that they must have recourse to their adversaries for a leader; a proceeding, of which I never met with above one example, and even that succeeded but ill, though it was recommended by an oracle; which advised some city in Greece to beg a general from their enemies, who, in scorn, sent them either a fiddler or a poet, I have forgotten which; and so much I remember, that his conduct was such, that they soon grew weary of him.

You pretend to be heartily resolved against repealing the sacramental test; yet at the same time, give the only great employment you have to dispose of, to a person, who will take that test against stomach, (by which word I understand many a man's conscience) who earnestly wishes it repealed, and will endeavour it to the utmost of his power; so that the first action after you meet, will be a sort of contravention to that test: and will any body go farther than your practise, to judge of your principles?

And now I am upon this subject, I cannot conclude, without saying something to a very popular argument against that sacramental test, which may be apt to shake many of those, who would otherwise wish well enough to it. They say, it was a new hardship put upon the dissenters, without any provocation; and, it is plain, could be no way necessary, because we had peaceably lived together so long without

Digitized by Google

out it. They add some other circumstances, of the arts by which it was obtained, and the person by whom it was inserted. Surely such people do not consider, that the penal laws against dissenters, were made wholly ineffectual, by the connivance and mercy of the government; so that all employments of the state, lay as open to them as they did to the best and most legal subjects. And what progress they would have made, by the advantages of a late conjunction, is obvious to imagine; which I take to be a full answer to that objection.

I remember, upon the transmission of that bill with the test-clause inserted, the dissenters and their partizans, among other topicks, spoke much of the good effects produced by the lenity of the government: that the presbyterians were grown very inconsiderable in their number and quality, and would daily come into the church, if we did not fright them from it by new severities. When the act was passed, they presently changed their style, and raised a clamour through both kingdoms, of the great numbers of considerable gentry who were laid aside, and could no longer serve their queen and country; which hyperbolical way of reckoning, when it came to be melted down into truth, amounted to about fifteen country justices, most of them of the lowest size, for estate, quality, or underſtanding. However, this puts me in mind of a passage told me by a great man, although I know not whether it be any where recorded: That a complaint was made to the king and council of Sweden, of a prodigious swarm of Scots, who, under the condition of pedlars, infested that kingdom to such a degree, as, if not suddenly prevented, might in time prove dangerous to the state, by

Digitized by Google

by joining with any discontented party. Meanwhile the Scots, by their agents, placed a good sum of money, to engage the officers of the prime minister in their behalf; who, in order to their defence, told the council, "He was assured they were but a few inconsiderable people, that lived honestly and poorly, and were not of any consequence." Their enemies offered to prove the contrary: whereupon an order was made to take their numbers, which was found to amount, as I remember, to about thirty thousand. The affair was again brought before the council, and great reproaches made to the first minister for his ill computation; who, presently taking the other handle, said, "He had reason to believe, the number yet greater than what was returned;" and then gravely offered to the king's consideration, "Whether it was safe to render desperate so great a body of able men, who had little to lose, and whom any hard treatment, would only serve to unite into a power capable of disturbing, if not destroying, the peace of the kingdom." And so they were suffered to continue.

Digitized by Google

SOME FEW

THOUGHTS

CONCERNING

THE REPEAL OF THE TEST.

THOSE of either side who have written upon this subject of the test, in making or answering objections, seem to fail, by not pressing sufficiently the chief point, upon which the controversy turns. The arguments used by those who write for the church, are very good in their kind; but will have little force under the present corruptions of mankind, because the authors treat this subject *tanquam in republicâ Platonis, et non in fæce Romuli.*

It must be confessed, that considering how few employments of any consequence, fall to the share of those English who are born in this kingdom, and those few very dearly purchased, at the expense of conscience, liberty, and all regard for the publick good, they are not worth contending for: and if nothing but profit were in the case, it would hardly cost me one sigh, when I should see those few scraps thrown among every species of fanaticks, to scuffle for among themselves.

And this will infallibly be the case, after repealing the test. For every subdivision of sect will, with equal

Digitized by Google

equal justice, pretend to have a share; and, as it is usual with sharers, will never think they have enough, while any pretender is left unprovided. I shall not except the quakers; because, when the passage is once let open for sects to partake in publick emoluments, it is very probable the lawfulness of taking oaths, and wearing carnal weapons, may be revealed to the brotherhood: which thought, I confess, was first put into my head by one of the shrewdest quakers in this kingdom *.

* The quaker hinted at by Dr. Swift was Mr. George Rooke, a linen-draper, a man who had a very good taste for wit, had read abundance of history, and was, perhaps, one of the most learned quakers in the world. He was author of an humourous pastoral in the quaker style. In a letter to Mr. Pope, Aug. 30, 1716, Dr. Swift says, "There is a young ingenious quaker in "this town who writes verses to his mistress, not very correct, "but in a strain purely what a poetical quaker should do, com- "mending her look and habit, &c. It gave me a hint, that a "set of quaker pastorals might succeed, if our friend Gay would "fancy it; and I think it a fruitful subject: pray hear what "he says." This hint produced from Mr. Gay, "The Espousal, "a sober eclogue, between two of the people called quakers," in which their peculiarity is well delineated.

Digitized by Google

A

TREATISE

ON

GOOD MANNERS AND GOOD BREEDING*.

GOOD Manners is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse.

Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred in the company.

As the best law is founded upon reason, so are the best manners. And as some lawyers have introduced unreasonable things into common law, so likewise many teachers have introduced absurd things into common good manners.

One principal point of this art is, to suit our behaviour to the three several degrees of men; our superiours, our equals, and those below us.

For instance, to press either of the two former to eat or drink, is a breach of manners; but a tradesman or a farmer must be thus treated, or else it will be difficult to persuade them that they are welcome.

* Which lord Chesterfield thus defines, "the respect of much "good sense, some good nature, and a little self-denial for the "sake of others, and with a view to obtain the same indulgence "from them." See Letter clxviii, the whole of which is professedly on this subject.

Pride

Digitized by Google

Pride, ill nature, and want of sense, are the three great sources of ill manners; without some one of these defects, no man will behave himself ill for want of experience, or of what, in the language of fools, is called knowing the world.

I defy any one to assign an incident wherein reason will not direct us what to say or do in company, if we are not misled by pride or ill nature.

Therefore I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners; but, because the former is a gift which very few among mankind are possessed of, therefore all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules upon common behaviour, best suited to their general customs or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense, to supply the defects of reason. Without which the gentlemanly part of dunces would be perpetually at cuffs, as they seldom fail when they happen to be drunk, or engaged in squabbles about women or play. And, God be thanked, there hardly happens a duel in a year, which may not be imputed to one of these three motives. Upon which account, I should be exceedingly sorry to find the legislature make any new laws against the practice of duelling; because the methods are easy, and many, for a wise man to avoid a quarrel with honour, or engage in it with innocence. And I can discover no political evil in suffering bullies, sharpers, and rakes, to rid the world of each other by a method of their own, where the law has not been able to find an expedient.

As the common forms of good manners were intended for regulating the conduct of those who have weak understandings; so they have been corrupted by the persons for whose use they were contrived.

Digitized by Google

For these people have fallen into a needless and endless way of multiplying ceremonies, which have been extremely troublesome to those who practise them, and insupportable to every body else: insomuch that wise men are often more uneasy at the over-civility of these refiners, than they could possibly be in the conversation of peasants or mechanicks.

The impertinencies of this ceremonial behaviour are no where better seen than at those tables where the ladies preside, who value themselves upon account of their good breeding; where a man must reckon upon passing an hour without doing any one thing he has a mind to; unless he will be so hardy as to break through all the settled decorum of the family. She determines what he loves best, and how much he shall eat; and if the master of the house happens to be of the same disposition, he proceeds, in the same tyrannical manner, to prescribe in the drinking part: at the same time you are under the necessity of answering a a thousand apologies for your entertainment. And although a good deal of this humour is pretty well worn off among many people of the best fashion, yet too much of it still remains, especially in the country; where an honest gentleman assured me, that having been kept four days against his will at a friend's house, with all the circumstances of hiding his boots, locking up the stable, and other contrivances of the like nature, he could not remember, from the moment he came into the house to the moment he left it, any one thing, wherein his inclination was not directly contradicted; as if the whole family had entered into a combination to torment him.

But, beside all this, it would be endless to recount the many foolish and ridiculous accidents I have observed

Digitized by Google

served among these unfortunate proselytes to ceremony. I have seen a duchess fairly knocked down, by the precipitancy of an officious coxcomb running to save her the trouble of opening a door. I remember upon a birthday at court, a great lady was rendered utterly disconsolate by a dish of sauce let fall by a page directly upon her headdress and brocade, while she gave a sudden turn to her elbow upon some point of ceremony with the person who sat next to her. Monsieur Buys, the Dutch envoy, whose politicks and manners were much of a size, brought a son with him, about thirteen years old, to a great table at court. The boy and his father, whatever they put on their plates, they first offered round in order, to every person in company; so that we could not get a minute's quiet during the whole dinner. At last their two plates happened to encounter, and with so much violence, that, being china, they broke in twenty pieces; and stained half the company with wet sweetmeats and cream.

There is a pedantry in manners, as in all arts and sciences; and sometimes in trades. Pedantry is properly the overrating of any kind of knowledge we pretend to. And if that kind of knowledge be a trifle in itself, the pedantry is the greater. For which reason I look upon fiddlers, dancing-masters, heralds, masters of the ceremony, &c. to be greater pedants than Lipsius, or the elder Scaliger. With this kind of pedants, the court, while I knew it, was always plentifully stocked; I mean from the gentleman usher (at least) inclusive, downward to the gentleman porter: who are, generally speaking, the most insignificant race of people that this island can afford, and with the smallest tincture of good manners; which is the only trade

Digitized by Google

trade they profess. For, being wholly illiterate, and conversing chiefly with each other, they reduce the whole system of breeding within the forms and circles of their several offices: and, as they are below the notice of ministers, they live and die in court under all revolutions, with great obsequiousness to those who are in any degree of credit or favour, and with rudeness and insolence to every body else. Whence I have long concluded, that good manners are not a plant of the court growth: for if they were, those people, who have understandings directly of a level for such acquirements, who have served such long apprenticeships to nothing else, would certainly have picked them up. For, as to the great officers, who attend the prince's person or councils, or preside in his family, they are a transient body, who have no better a title to good manners than their neighbours, nor will probably have recourse to gentlemen ushers for instruction. So that I know little to be learned at court upon this head, except in the material circumstance of dress; wherein the authority of the maids of honour must indeed be allowed to be almost equal to that of a favourite actress.

I remember a passage my lord Bolingbroke told me; that going to receive prince Eugene of Savoy at his landing, in order to conduct him immediately to the queen, the prince said, he was much concerned that he could not see her majesty that night; for monsieur Hoffman (who was then by) had assured his highness that he could not be admitted into her presence with a tied up periwig; that his equipage was not arrived; and that he had endeavoured in vain to borrow a long one among all his valets and pages. My lord turned the matter into a jest, and brought the

Digitized by Google

the prince to her majesty; for which he was highly censured by the whole tribe of gentlemen ushers; among whom monsieur Hoffman, an old dull resident of the emperor's, had picked up this material point of ceremony; and which, I believe, was the best lesson he had learned in five and twenty years residence.

I make a difference between good manners and good breeding; although, in order to vary my expression, I am sometimes forced to confound them. By the first, I only understand the art of remembering and applying certain settled forms of general behaviour. But good breeding is of a much larger extent; for, beside an uncommon degree of literature sufficient to qualify a gentleman for reading a play or a political pamphlet, it takes in a great compass of knowledge; no less than that of dancing, fighting, gaming, making the circle of Italy, riding the great horse, and speaking French; not to mention some other secondary or subaltern accomplishments, which are more easily acquired. So that the difference between good breeding and good manners lies in this; that the former cannot be attained to by the best understandings without study and labour: whereas a tolerable degree of reason will instruct us in every part of good manners, without other assistance.

I can think of nothing more useful upon this subject, than to point out some particulars, wherein the very essentials of good manners are concerned, the neglect or perverting of which does very much disturb the good commerce of the world, by introducing a traffick of mutual uneasiness in most companies.

First, a necessary part of good manners is a punctual

Digitized by Google

tual observance of time at our own dwellings, or those of others, or at third places; whether upon matter of civility, business, or diversion; which rule, though it be a plain dictate of common reason, yet the greatest minister I ever knew was the greatest trespasser against it; by which all his business doubled upon him, and placed him in a continual arrear. Upon which I often used to rally him, as deficient in point of good manners. I have known more than one ambassador, and secretary of state, with a very moderate portion of intellectuals, execute their offices with good success and applause, by the mere force of exactness and regularity. If you duly observe time for the service of another, it doubles the obligation; if upon your own account, it would be manifest folly, as well as ingratitude, to neglect it; if both are concerned, to make your equal or inferiour attend on you to his own disadvantage, is pride and injustice.

Ignorance of forms cannot properly be styled ill manners: because forms are subject to frequent changes; and consequently, being not founded upon reason, are beneath a wise man's regard. Besides, they vary in every country; and after a short period of time, very frequently in the same; so that a man, who travels, must needs be at first a stranger to them in every court through which he passes; and, perhaps, at his return, as much a stranger in his own; and after all, they are easier to be remembered or forgotten than faces or names.

Indeed, among the many impertinencies that superficial young men bring with them from abroad, this bigotry of forms is one of the principal, and more predominant than the rest; who look upon them not only

Digitized by Google

only as if they were matters capable of admitting of choice, but even as points of importance; and are therefore zealous upon all occasions to introduce and propagate the new forms and fashions they have brought back with them: So that, usually speaking, the worst bred person in company, is a young traveller just returned from abroad.

Digitized by Google

ON THE

DEATH

OF

MRS. JOHNSON [STELLA].

THIS day, being Sunday, January 28th, 1727-8, about eight o'clock at night, a servant brought me a note, with an account of the death of the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend, that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with. She expired about six in the evening of this day; and as soon as I am left alone, which is about eleven at night, I resolve, for my own satisfaction, to say something of her life and character.

She was born at Richmond in Surry, on the thirteenth day of March, in the year 1681. Her father was a younger brother of a good family in Nottinghamshire, her mother of a lower degree; and indeed she had little to boast of her birth. I knew her from six years old, and had some share in her education, by directing what books she should read, and perpetually instructing her in the principles of honour and virtue; from which she never swerved in any one action or moment of her life. She was sickly from her childhood until about the age of fifteen, but then grew

Digitized by Google

grew into perfect health, and was looked upon as one of the most beautiful, graceful, and agreeable young women in London, only a little too fat. Her hair was blacker than a raven, and every feature of her face in perfection. She lived generally in the country, with a family where she contracted an intimate friendship with another lady, of more advanced years. I was then, to my mortification, settled in Ireland; and about a year after, going to visit my friends in England, I found she was a little uneasy upon the death of a person on whom she had some dependance. Her fortune, at that time, was in all not above fifteen hundred pounds, the interest of which was but a scanty maintenance, in so dear a country, for one of her spirit. Upon this consideration, and indeed very much for my own satisfaction, who had few friends or acquaintance in Ireland, I prevailed with her and her dear friend and companion, the other lady, to draw what money they had into Ireland, a great part of their fortune being in annuities upon funds. Money was then at ten *per cent* in Ireland, beside the advantage of returning it, and all necessaries of life at half the price. They complied with my advice, and soon after came over; but I happening to continue some time longer in England, they were much discouraged to live in Dublin, where they were wholly strangers. She was at that time about nineteen years old, and her person was soon distinguished. But the adventure looked so like a frolick, the censure held, for some time, as if there were a secret history in such a removal; which, however, soon blew off by her excellent conduct. She came over with her friend on the in the year 170— *; and they both lived together

* Probably 1700.

Digitized by Google

gether until this day, when death removed her from us. For some years past, she had been visited with continual ill health; and several times, within these last two years, her life was despaired of. But, for this twelvemonth past, she never had a day's health; and, properly speaking, she has been dying six months, but kept alive, almost against nature, by the generous kindness of two physicians and the care of her friends. —Thus far I writ the same night between eleven and twelve.

Never was any of her sex born with better gifts of the mind, or who more improved them by reading and conversation. Yet her memory was not of the best, and was impaired in the latter years of her life. But I cannot call to mind that I ever once heard her make a wrong judgment of persons, books, or affairs. Her advice was always the best, and with the greatest freedom, mixed with the greateſt decency. She had a graceſulness, somewhat more than human, in every motion, word, and action. Never was so happy a conjunction of civility, freedom, easiness, and sincerity. There seemed to be a combination among all that knew her, to treat her with a dignity much beyond her rank: yet people of all sorts were never more easy than in her company. Mr. Addison, when he was in Ireland, being introduced to her, immediately found her out: and, if he had not soon after left the kingdom, assured me he would have used all endeavours to cultivate her friendship. A rude or conceited coxcomb passed his time very ill, upon the least breach of respect; for, in such a case, she had no mercy, but was sure to expose him to the contempt of the standers by; yet in such a manner as he was ashamed to complain, and durst not resent. All of

us

Digitized by Google

us who had the happiness of her friendship agreed unanimously, that, in an afternoon or evening's conversation, she never failed, before we parted, of delivering the best thing that was said in the company. Some of us have written down several of her sayings, or what the French call bons mots, wherein she excelled almost beyond belief. She never mistook the understanding of others; nor ever said a severe word, but where a much severer was deserved.

Her servants loved, and almost adored her at the same time. She would, upon occasions, treat them with freedom: yet her demeanour was so awful, that they durst not fail in the least point of respect. She chid them seldom; but it was with severity, which had an effect upon them for a long time after.

January 29th. My head aches, and I can write no more.

January 30th. Tuesday.

This is the night of the funeral, which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night; and I am removed into another apartment, that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bedchamber.

With all the softness of temper that became a lady, she had the personal courage of a hero. She and her friend having removed their lodgings to a new house, which stood solitary, a parcel of rogues, armed, attempted the house, where there was only one boy: she was then about four and twenty: and having been warned to apprehend some such attempt, she learned the management of a pistol; and the other women and servants being half dead with fear, she stole softly to her diningroom window, put on a black hood to prevent being seen, primed the pistol

Digitized by Google

fresh, gently lifted up the sash; and taking her aim with the utmost presence of mind, discharged the pistol, loaden with the bullets, into the body of one villain, who stood the fairest mark. The fellow, mortally wounded, was carried off by the rest, and died the next morning: but his companions could not be found. The duke of Ormond had often drunk her health to me upon that account, and had always a high esteem for her. She was indeed under some apprehensions of going in a boat, after some danger she had narrowly escaped by water; but she was reasoned thoroughly out of it. She was never known to cry out, or discover any fear, in a coach or on horseback; or any uneasiness by those sudden accidents with which most of her sex, either by weakness or affectation, appear so much disordered.

She never had the least absence of mind in conversation, nor given to interruption, or appeared eager to put in her word, by waiting impatiently, until another had done. She spoke in a most agreeable voice, in the plainest words, never hesitating except out of modesty before new faces, where she was somewhat reserved; nor, among her nearest friends, ever spoke much at a time. She was but little versed in the common topicks of female chat; scandal, censure, and detraction, never came out of her mouth: yet, among a few friends, in private conversation, she made little ceremony in discovering her contempt of a coxcomb, and describing all his follies to the life; but the follies of her own sex, she was rather inclined to extenuate, or to pity.

When she was once convinced by open facts of any breach of truth or honour, in a person of high station, especially in the church, she could not conceal her indig-

Digitized by Google

indignation, nor hear them named without showing her displeasure in her countenance; particularly one or two of the latter sort, whom she had known and esteemed, but detested above all mankind, when it was manifest, that they had sacrificed those two precious virtues to their ambition, and would much sooner have forgiven them the common immoralities of the laity.

Her frequent fits of sickness, in most parts of her life, had prevented her from making that progress in reading which she would otherwise have done. She was well versed in the Greek and Roman story, and was not unskilled in that of France and England. She spoke French perfectly, but forgot much of it by neglect and sickness. She had read carefully all the best books of travels, which serve to open and enlarge the mind. She understood the Platonick and Epicurean philosophy, and judged very well of the defects of the latter. She made very judicious abstracts of the best books she had read. She understood the nature of government, and could point out all the errours of Hobbes, both in that and religion. She had a good insight into physick, and knew somewhat of anatomy; in both which, she was instructed in her younger days, by an eminent physician, who had her long under his care, and bore the highest esteem for her person and understanding. She had a true taste of wit and good sense, both in poetry and prose, and was a perfect good critick of style: neither was it easy to find a more proper or impartial judge, whose advice an author might better rely on, if he intended to send a thing into the world, provided it was on a subject that came within the compass of her knowledge. Yet, perhaps, she was sometimes too

Digitized by Google

severe, which is a safe and pardonable errour. She preserved her wit, judgment, and vivacity, to the last; but often used to complain of her memory.

Her fortune, with some accession, could not, as I have heard say, amount to much more than two thousand pounds, whereof a great part fell with her life, having been placed upon annuities in England, and one in Ireland.

In a person so extraordinary, perhaps, it may be pardonable to mention some particulars, although of little moment; farther than to set forth her character. Some presents of gold pieces being often made to her while she was a girl, by her mother and other friends, on promise to keep them; she grew into such a spirit of thrift, that, in about three years, they amounted to above two hundred pounds. She used to show them with boasting; but her mother, apprehending she would be cheated of them, prevailed, in some months, and with great importunities, to have them put out to interest; when, the girl, losing the pleasure of seeing and counting her gold, which she never failed of doing many times in a day, and despairing of heaping up such another treasure, her humour took quite the contrary turn: she grew careless and squandering of every new acquisition, and so continued till about two and twenty: when, by advice of some friends, and the fright of paying large bills of tradesmen who enticed her into their debt, she began to reflect upon her own folly, and was never at rest until she had discharged all her shop bills, and refunded herself a considerable sum she had run out. After which, by the addition of a few years and a superiour understanding, she became, and continued all her life, a most prudent economist; yet still with a stronger bent to the liberal

Digitized by Google

liberal side, wherein she gratified herself by avoiding all expense in clothes (which she ever despised) beyond what was merely decent. And, although her frequent returns of sickness were very chargeable, except fees to physicians, of which she met with several so generous, that she could force nothing on them, (and indeed she must otherwise have been undone) yet she never was without a considerable sum of ready money. Insomuch that upon her death, when her nearest friends thought her very bare, her executors found in her strong box about a hundred and fifty pounds in gold. She lamented the narrowness of her fortune in nothing so much, as that it did not enable her to entertain her friends so often, and in so hospitable a manner, as she desired. Yet they were always welcome; and, while she was in health to direct, were treated with neatness and elegance: so that the revenues of her and her companion, passed for much more considerable than they really were. They lived always in lodgings; their domesticks consisted of two maids and one man. She kept an account of all the family expenses, from her arrival in Ireland to some months before her death; and she would often repine, when looking back upon the annals of her household bills, that every thing necessary for life was double the price, while interest of money was sunk almost to one half; so that the addition made to her fortune, was indeed grown absolutely necessary.

[I since writ as I found time.]

But her charity to the poor was a duty not to be diminished, and therefore became a tax upon those tradesmen, who furnish the fopperies of other ladies. She bought clothes as seldom as possible, and those as plain and cheap as consisted with the situation she

Digitized by Google

was in; and wore no lace for many years. Either her judgment or fortune was extraordinary, in the choice of those on whom she bestowed her charity; for it went farther in doing good than double the sum from any other hand. And I have heard her say, "she always met with gratitude from the poor:" which must be owing to her skill in distinguishing proper objects, as well as her gracious manner in relieving them.

But she had another quality that much delighted her, although it might be thought a kind of check upon her bounty; however it was a pleasure she could not resist: I mean, that of making agreeable presents, wherein I never knew her equal, although it be an affair of as delicate a nature as most in the course of life. She used to define a present, "That "it was a gift to a friend of something he wanted, or "was fond of, and which could not be easily gotten "for money." I am confident, during my acquaintance with her, she has, in these and some other kinds of liberality, disposed of to the value of several hundred pounds. As to presents made to herself, she received them with great unwillingness, but especially from those to whom she had ever given any; being, on all occasions, the most disinterested mortal I ever knew or heard of.

From her own disposition, at least as much as from the frequent want of health, she seldom made any visits; but her own lodgings, from before twenty years old, were frequented by many persons of the graver sort, who all respected her highly, upon her good sense, good manners, and conversation. Among these were the late primate Lindsay, bishop Lloyd, bishop Ashe, bishop Brown, bishop Sterne, bishop Pulleyn,

Digitized by Google

Pulleyn, with some others of later date; and indeed the greatest number of her acquaintance was among the clergy. Honour, truth, liberality, good nature, and modesty, were the virtues she chiefly possessed, and most valued in her acquaintance; and where she found them, would be ready to allow for some defects, nor valued them less, although they did not shine in learning or in wit: but would never give the least allowance for any failures in the former, even to those who made the greatest figure in either of the two latter. She had no use of any person's liberality, yet her detestation of covetous people made her uneasy if such a one was in her company; upon which occasion she would say many things very entertaining and humourous.

She never interrupted any person who spoke; she laughed at no mistakes they made, but helped them out with modesty; and if a good thing were spoken, but neglected, she would not let it fall, but set it in the best light to those who were present. She listened to all that was said, and had never the least distraction or absence of thought.

It was not safe, nor prudent, in her presence, to offend in the least word against modesty; for she then gave full employment to her wit, her contempt, and resentment, under which even stupidity and brutality were forced to sink into confusion; and the guilty person, by her future avoiding him like a bear or a satyr, was never in a way to transgress a second time.

It happened one single coxcomb, of the pert kind, was in her company, among several other ladies; and in his flippant way, began to deliver some double meanings: the rest flapped their fans, and used the

Digitized by Google

other common expedients practised in such cases, of appearing not to mind or comprehend what was said. Her behaviour was very different, and perhaps may be censured. She said thus to the man: "Sir, all "these ladies and I understand your meaning very "well, having, in spite of our care, too often met "with those of your sex who wanted manners and "good sense. But, believe me, neither virtuous nor "even vicious women love such kind of conversation. "However, I will leave you, and report your be-"haviour: and whatever visit I make, I shall first "inquire at the door whether you are in the house, "that I may be sure to avoid you." I know not whether a majority of ladies would approve of such a proceeding; but I believe the practice of it would soon put an end to that corrupt conversation, the worst effect of dullness, ignorance, impudence, and vulgarity; and the highest affront to the modesty and understanding of the female sex.

By returning very few visits, she had not much company of her own sex, except those whom she most loved for their easiness, or esteemed for their good sense; and those, not insisting on ceremony, came often to her. But she rather chose men for her companions, the usual topicks of ladies discourse being such as she had little knowledge of, and less relish. Yet no man was upon the rack to entertain her, for she easily descended to any thing that was innocent and diverting. News, politicks, censure, family management, or town talk, she always diverted to something else; but these indeed seldom happened, for she chose her company better: and therefore many, who mistook her and themselves, having solicited her acquaintance, and finding themselves disappointed after

Digitized by Google

after a few visits, dropped off; and she was never known to inquire into the reason, or ask what was become of them.

She was never positive in arguing; and she usually treated those who were so, in a manner which well enough gratified that unhappy disposition; yet in such a sort as made it very contemptible, and at the same time did some hurt to the owners. Whether this proceeded from her easiness in general, or from her indifference to persons, or from her despair of mending them, or from the same practice which she much liked in Mr. Addison, I cannot determine; but when she saw any of the company very warm in a wrong opinion, she was more inclined to confirm them in it than oppose them. The excuse she commonly gave, when her friends asked the reason, was, "That "it prevented noise, and saved time." Yet I have known her very angry with some, whom she much esteemed, for sometimes falling into that infirmity.

She loved Ireland much better than the generality of those who owe both their birth and riches to it; and, having brought over all the fortune she had in money, left the reversion of the best part of it, one thousand pounds, to Dr. Stephens's Hospital. She detested the tyranny and injustice of England, in their treatment of this kingdom. She had indeed reason to love a country, where she had the esteem and friendship of all who knew her, and the universal good report of all who ever heard of her, without one exception, if I am told the truth by those who keep general conversation. Which character is the more extraordinary, in falling to a person of so much knowledge, wit, and vivacity, qualities that are used to create envy, and consequently censure; and must be rather

Digitized by Google

rather imputed to her great modesty, gentle behaviour, and inoffensiveness, than to her superiour virtues.

Although her knowledge, from books and company, was much more extensive than usually falls to the share of her sex; yet she was so far from making a parade of it, that her female visitants, on their first acquaintance, who expected to discover it by what they call hard words and deep discourse, would be sometimes disappointed, and say, "They found she "was like other women." But wise men, through all her modesty, whatever they discoursed on, could easily observe that she understood them very well, by the judgment shown in her observations, as well as in her questions.

Digitized by Google

CHARACTER

OF

MRS. HOWARD.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1727.

I SHALL say nothing of her wit or beauty, which are allowed by all persons who can judge of either, when they hear or see her. Besides, beauty being transient, and a trifle, cannot justly make part of a character. And I leave others to celebrate her wit, because it will be of no use in that part of her character which I intend to draw. Neither shall I relate any part of her history; farther than that she went, in the prime of her youth, to the court of Hanover with her husband, and became of the bedchamber to the present princess of Wales, living in expectation of the queen's * death: upon which event she came over with her mistress, and has ever since continued in her service; where, from the attendance daily paid her by the ministers, and all expectants, she is reckoned much the greatest favourite of the court at Leicester-house: a situation which she has long affected to desire that it might not be believed.

There is no politician who more carefully watches the motions and dispositions of things and persons at St. James's, nor can form his language with a more

* Queen Anne.

imperceptible

Digitized by Google

imperceptible dexterity to the present posture of a court, or more early foresee what style may be proper upon any approaching juncture of affairs; whereof she can gather early intelligence without asking it, and often when even those from whom she has it are not sensible that they are giving it to her, but equally with others admire her sagacity. Sir Robert Walpole and she both think they understand each other, and are both equally mistaken.

With persons where she is to manage, she is very dextrous in that point of skill which the French call *tâter le pavè*; with others, she is a great vindicator of all present proceedings, but in such a manner, as if she were under no concern farther than her own conviction, and wondering how any body can think otherwise. And the danger is, that she may come in time to believe herself; which, under a change of princes, and a great addition of credit, might have bad consequences. She is a most unconscionable dealer; for, in return of a few good words, which she gives to her lords and gentlemen daily waiters before their faces, she gets ten thousand from them behind her back, which are of real service to her character. The credit she has is managed with the utmost thrift; and whenever she employs it, which is very rarely, it is only upon such occasions where she is sure to get much more than she spends. For instance, she would readily press sir Robert Walpole to do some favour for colonel Churchill, or Doddington; the prince, for a mark of grace to Mr. Schutz; and the princess, to be kind to Mrs. Clayton. She sometimes falls into the general mistake of all courtiers, which is that of not suiting her talents to the abilities of others, but thinking those she deals with

to

Digitized by Google

to have less art than they really possess; so that she may possibly be deceived when she thinks she deceives.

In all offices of life, except those of a courtier, she acts with justice, generosity, and truth. She is ready to do good as a private person, and I would almost think in charity that she will not do harm as a courtier, unless to please those in chief power.

In religion she is at least a latitudinarian, being not an enemy to books written by the freethinkers; and herein she is the more blamable, because she has too much morality to stand in need of them, requiring only a due degree of faith for putting her in the road to salvation. I speak this of her as a private lady, not as a court favourite, for, in the latter capacity, she can show neither faith nor works.

If she had never seen a court, it is not impossible that she might have been a friend.

She abounds in good words, and expressions of good wishes, and will concert a hundred schemes for the service of those whom she would be thought to favour: schemes, that sometimes arise from them, and sometimes from herself; although, at the same time, she very well knows them to be without the least probability of succeeding. But, to do her justice, she never feeds or deceives any person with promises, where she does not at the same time intend a degree of sincerity.

She is, upon the whole, an excellent companion for men of the best accomplishments, who have nothing to desire or expect *.

What

* "I wish I could tell you any agreeable news of what your "heart is concerned in; but I have a sort of quarrel with Mrs. "H——

Digitized by Google

What part she may act hereafter in a larger sphere, as lady of the bedchamber to a great q—n (upon supposing the death of his present majesty *, and of the earl of Suffolk, to whose title her husband succeeds) and in high esteem with a k—g, neither she nor I can foretel. My own opinion is natural and obvious; that her talents as a courtier will spread, enlarge, and multiply to such a degree, that her private virtues, for want of room and time to operate, will be laid up clean (like clothes in a chest) to be used and put on, whenever satiety, or some reverse of fortune, or increase of ill health (to which last she is subject) shall dispose her to retire. In the mean time, it will be her wisdom to take care that they may not be tarnished or moth eaten, for want of airing and turning at least once a year.

" H—— for not loving herself so well as she does her friends; " for those she makes happy, but not herself. There is a sort " of sadness about her, which grieves me, and which I have " learned by experience, will increase upon an indolent (I will " not say an affected) resignation to it. It will dose in men, " and much more in women, who have a natural softness which " sinks them even when reason does not." Pope, Letters to a Lady, page 76. N.

* George the First.

Digitized by Google

CHARACTER

OF

PRIMATE MARSH.

MARSH has the reputation of most profound and universal learning; this is the general opinion, neither can it be easily disproved. An old rusty iron chest in a banker's shop, strongly locked, and wonderful heavy, is full of gold; this is the general opinion, neither can it be disproved, provided the key be lost, and what is in it be wedged so close that it will not by any motion discover the metal by the chinking. Doing good is his pleasure: and as no man consults another in his pleasures, neither does he in this; by his awkwardness and unadvisedness disappointing his own good designs. His high station has placed him in the way of great employments, which, without in the least polishing his native rusticity, have given him a tincture of pride and ambition. But these vices would have passed concealed under his natural simplicity, if he had not endeavoured to hide them by art. His disposition to study is the very same with that of a usurer to hoard up money, or of a vicious young fellow to a wench: nothing but avarice and evil concupiscence, to which his constitution has fortunately given a more innocent turn. He is sordid and suspicious in his domesticks, without love or hatred;

Digitized by Google

tred; which is but reasonable, since he has neither friend nor enemy; without joy or grief; in short, without all passions but fear, to which of all others he has least temptation, having nothing to get or to lose: no posterity, relation, or friend to be solicitous about; and placed by his station above the reach of fortune or envy. He has found out the secret of preferring men without deserving their thanks; and where he dispenses his favours to persons of merit, they are less obliged to him than to fortune. He is the first of human race, that with great advantages of learning, piety, and station, ever escaped being a great man. That which relishes best with him, is mixed liquor and mixed company; and he is seldom unprovided with very bad of both. He is so wise as to value his own health more than other men's noses, so that the most honourable place at his table is much the worst, especially in summer. It has been affirmed that originally he was not altogether devoid of wit, till it was extruded from his head to make room for other men's thoughts. He will admit a governor, provided it be one who is very officious and diligent, outwardly pious, and one that knows how to manage and make the most of his fear. No man will be either glad or sorry at his death, except his successor.

Digitized by Google

THOUGHTS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

LAWS penned with the utmost care and exactness, and in the vulgar language, are often perverted to wrong meanings; then why should we wonder that the Bible is so?

Although men are accused for not knowing their weakness, yet perhaps as few know their own strength.

A man seeing a wasp creeping into a vial filled with honey, that was hung on a fruit tree, said thus: Why, thou sottish animal, art thou mad to go into the vial, where you see many hundred of your kind dying before you? The reproach is just, answered the wasp, but not from you men, who are so far from taking example by other people's follies, that you will not take warning by your own. If after falling several times into this vial, and escaping by chance, I should fall in again, I should then but resemble you.

An old miser kept a tame jackdaw, that used to steal pieces of money, and hide them in a hole, which the cat observing, asked, Why he would hoard up those round shining things that he could make no use of? Why, said the jackdaw, my master has a whole chest full, and makes no more use of them than I.

Digitized by Google

Men are contented to be laughed at for their wit, but not for their folly.

If the men of wit and genius would resolve never to complain in their works of criticks and detractors, the next age would not know that they ever had any.

After all the maxims and systems of trade and commerce, a stander by would think the affairs of the world were most ridiculously contrived.

There are few countries, which, if well cultivated, would not support double the number of their inhabitants, and yet fewer where one third part of the people are not extremely stinted even in the necessaries of life. I send out twenty barrels of corn, which would maintain a family in bread for a year, and I bring back in return a vessel of wine, which half a dozen good fellows would drink in less than a month, at the expense of their health and reason.

A motto for the jesuits:

Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?

A man would have but few spectators, if he offered to show for threepence how he could thrust a redhot iron into a barrel of gunpowder, and it should not take fire.

Query, Whether churches are not dormitories of the living as well as of the dead?

Harry Killegrew said to lord Wharton, "You "would not swear at that rate, if you thought you "were doing God honour."

A copy of verses kept in the cabinet, and only shown to a few friends, is like a virgin much sought after and admired; but when printed and published, is like a common whore, whom any body may purchase for half a crown.

Lewis

Digitized by Google

Lewis the XIVth of France spent his life in turning a good name into a great.

Since the union of divinity and humanity is the great article of our religion, it is odd to see some clergymen in their writings of divinity, wholly devoid of humanity.

The Epicureans began to spread at Rome in the empire of Augustus, as the Socinians, and even the Epicureans too did in England toward the end of king Charles the Second's reign: which is reckoned, though very absurdly, our Augustan age. They both seem to be corruptions occasioned by luxury and peace, and by politeness beginning to decline.

Sometimes I read a book with pleasure, and detest the author.

At a bookseller's shop some time ago I saw a book with this title; "Poems by the author of the Choice." Not enduring to read a dozen lines, I asked the company with me, whether they had ever seen the book, or heard of the poem whence the author denominated himself; they were all as ignorant as I. But I find it common with these small dealers in wit and learning, to give themselves a title from their first adventure, as don Quixote usually did from his last. This arises from that great importance which every man supposes himself to be of.

One Dennis, commonly called the critick, who had writ a threepenny pamphlet against the power of France, being in the country, and hearing of a French privateer hovering about the coast, although he were twenty miles from the sea, fled to town, and told his friends, they need not wonder at his haste; for the king of France, having got intelligence where he was, had sent a privateer on purpose to catch him.

Digitized by Google

Dr. Gee, prebendary of Westminster, who had writ a small paper against popery, being obliged to travel for his health, affected to disguise his person, and change his name, as he passed through Portugal, Spain, and Italy; telling all the English he met, that he was afraid of being murdered, or put into the inquisition. He was acting the same farce at Paris, till Mr. Prior (who was then secretary to the embassy) quite disconcerted the doctor, by maliciously discovering the secret; and offering to engage body for body, that not a creature would hurt him, or had ever heard of him or his pamphlet.

A chambermaid to a lady of my acquaintance, thirty miles from London, had the very same turn of thought, when talking with one of her fellow servants, she said; "I hear it is all over London already that "I am going to leave my lady:" and so had a footman, who being newly married, desired his comrade to tell him freely what the town said of it.

When somebody was telling a certain great minister that people were discontented; "Poh, said he, "half a dozen fools are prating in a coffeehouse, "and presently think their own noise about their ears "is made by the world."

The death of a private man is generally of so little importance to the world, that it cannot be a thing of great importance in itself; and yet I do not observe from the practice of mankind, that either philosophy or nature have sufficiently armed us against the fears which attend it. Neither do I find any thing able to reconcile us to it, but extreme pain, shame, or despair; for poverty, imprisonment, ill fortune, grief, sickness, and old age, do generally fail.

Whence comes the custom of bidding a woman look

Digitized by Google

look upon her apron strings to find an excuse? Was it not from the apron of fig leaves worn by Eve, when she covered herself, and was the first of her sex who made a bad excuse for eating the forbidden fruit?

I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed.

Do not we see how easily we pardon our own actions and passions, and the very infirmities of our bodies; why should it be wonderful to find us pardon our own dullness?

Dignity and station, or great riches, are in some sort necessary to old men, in order to keep the young at a distance, who are otherwise apt to insult them upon the score of their age.

There is no vice or folly that requires so much nicety and skill to manage, as vanity; nor any, which, by ill management, makes so contemptible a figure.

Observation is an old man's memory.

Politicks are nothing but corruptions, and are consequently of no use to a good king or a good ministry; for which reason all courts are so full of politicks.

Eloquence smooth and cutting, is like a razor whetted with oil.

Imaginary evils soon become real ones by indulging our reflections on them; as he, who in a melancholy fancy sees something like a face on the wall or the wainscot, can, by two or three touches with a lead pencil, make it look visible, and agreeing with what he fancied.

Men of great parts are often unfortunate in the management of publick business, because they are apt to

Digitized by Google

go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination. This I once said to my lord Bolingbroke, and desired he would observe, that the clerks in his office used a sort of ivory knife with a blunt edge to divide a sheet of paper, which never failed to cut it even, only requiring a steady hand, whereas if they should make use of a sharp penknife, the sharpness would make it go often out of the crease and disfigure the paper.

"He who does not provide for his own house," St. Paul says, "is worse than an infidel." And I think, he who provides only for his own house, is just equal with an infidel.

Jealousy, like fire, may shrivel up horns, but it makes them stink.

A footman's hat should fly off to every body; and therefore Mercury, who was Jupiter's footman, had wings fastened to his cap.

When a man pretends love, but courts for money, he is like a juggler, who conjures away your shilling, and conveys something very indecent under the hat.

All panegyricks are mingled with an infusion of poppy.

I have known men happy enough at ridicule, who upon grave subjects were perfectly stupid; of which Dr. Echard of Cambridge, who writ "The Contempt "of the Clergy," was a great instance.

One top of Parnassus was sacred to Bacchus, the other to Apollo.

Matrimony has many children; Repentance, Discord, Poverty, Jealousy, Sickness, Spleen, Loathing, &c.

Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.

The two maxims of any great man at court, are, always

Digitized by Google

always to keep his countenance, and never to keep his word.

I asked a poor man how he did? He said, he was like a washball, always in decay.

Hippocrates, Aph. 32. Sect. 6. observes, that stuttering people are always subject to a looseness. I wish physicians had power to remove the profusion of words in many people to the inferiour parts.

A man dreamed he was a cuckold; a friend told him it was a bad sign, because when a dream is true, Virgil says it passes through the horned gate.

Love is a flame, and therefore we say, beauty is attractive; because physicians observe that fire is a great drawer.

Civis, the most honourable name among the Romans; a citizen, a word of contempt among us.

A lady who had gallantries and several children, told her husband he was like the austere man, who reaped where he did not sow.

We read that an ass's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver; they have been lately sold ten thousand times dearer, and yet they were never more plentiful.

I must complain the cards are ill shuffled, till I have a good hand.

Very few men do properly live at present, but are providing to live another time.

When I am reading a book, whether wise or silly, it seems to me to be alive and talking to me.

Whoever live at a different end of the town from me, I look upon as persons out of the world, and only myself and the scene about me to be in it.

When I was young, I thought all the world, as well as myself, was wholly taken up in discoursing upon the last new play.

Digitized by Google

My lord Cromarty, after fourscore, went to his country house in Scotland, with a resolution to stay six years there and live thriftily, in order to save up money, that he might spend in London.

It is said of the horses in the vision, that their power was in their mouths and in their tails. What is said of horses in the vision, in reality may be said of women.

Elephants are always drawn smaller than the life, but a flea always larger.

When old folks tell us of many passages in their youth between them and their company, we are apt to think how much happier those times were than the present.

Why does the elder sister dance barefoot, when the younger is married before her? is it not that she may appear shorter, and consequently be thought younger than the bride?

No man will take counsel, but every man will take money: therefore money is better than counsel.

I never yet knew a wag (as the term is) who was not a dunce.

A person reading to me a dull poem of his own making, I prevailed on him to scratch out six lines together; in turning over the leaf, the ink being wet, it marked as many lines on the other side; whereof the poet complaining, I bid him be easy, for it would be better if those were out too.

At Windsor I was observing to my lord Bolingbroke, that the tower where the maids of honour lodged (who at that time were not very handsome) was much frequented with crows. My lord said, it was because they smelt carrion.

Digitized by Google

BONS MOTS DE STELLA.

A LADY of my intimate acquaintance both in England and Ireland, in which last kingdom she lived from the eighteenth year of her age, twenty-six years, had the most and finest accomplishments of any person I ever knew of either sex. It was observed by all her acquaintance, that she never failed in company to say the best thing that was said, whoever was by; yet her companions were usually persons of the best understanding in the kingdom. Some of us, who were her nearest friends, lamented that we never wrote down her remarks, and what the French call bons mots. I will recollect as many as I can remember.

We were diverting ourselves at a play called "What is it like?" One person is to think, and the rest, without knowing the thing, to say what it is like. The thing thought on was the spleen; she had said it was like an oyster, and gave her reason immediately, because it is removed by taking steel inwardly.

Dr. Sheridan, who squandered more than he could afford, took out his purse as he sat by the fire, and found it was very hot; she said the reason was, that his money burned in his pocket.

She called to her servants to know what ill smell was in the kitchen; they answered, they were making matches: Well, said she, I have heard matches were made in Heaven, but by the brimstone one would think they were made in Hell.

After

Digitized by Google

After she had been eating some sweet thing, a little of it happened to stick on her lips; a gentleman told her of it, and offered to lick it off; she said, No, sir, I thank you, I have a tongue of my own.

In the late king's time, a gentleman asked Jervas the painter, where he lived in London? he answered, next door to the king, for his house was near St. James's. The other wondering how that could be; she said, you mistake Mr. Jervas, for he only means next door to the sign of a king.

A gentleman who had been very silly and pert in her company, at last began to grieve at remembering the loss of a child lately dead. A bishop sitting by comforted him; that he should be easy, because the child was gone to Heaven. No, my lord, said she, that is it which most grieves him, because he is sure never to see his child there.

Having seen some letters writ by a king in a very large hand, and some persons wondering at them, she said it confirmed the old saying, That kings had long hands.

Dr. Sheridan, famous for punning, intended to sell a bargain, said, he had made a very good pun. Some body asked, what it was? He answered, my a—. The other taking offence, she insisted the doctor was in the right, for every body knew that punning was his blind side.

When she was extremely ill, her physician said, Madam, you are near the bottom of the hill, but we will endeavour to get you up again. She answered, Doctor, I fear I shall be out of breath before I get up to the top.

A dull parson talking of a very smart thing, said to another parson as he came out of the pulpit, he was hammering

Digitized by Google

hammering a long time, but could not remember the jest; she being impatient said, I remember it very well, for I was there, and the words were these; Sir, you have been blundering at a story this half hour, and can neither make head nor tail of it.

A very dirty clergyman of her acquaintance, who affected smartness and repartee, was asked by some of the company how his nails came to be so dirty? He was at a loss; but she solved the difficulty, by saying, the doctor's nails grew dirty by scratching himself.

A quaker apothecary sent her a vial corked; it had a broad brim, and a label of paper about its neck. What is that, said she, my apothecary's son? The ridiculous resemblance, and the suddenness of the question, set us all a laughing.

Digitized by Google

SOME

REASONS

AGAINST

THE BILL FOR SETTLING THE TITHE

OF

HEMP, FLAX, &c. BY A MODUS *.

THE clergy did little expect to have any cause of complaint against the present house of commons: who, in the last session, were pleased to throw out a bill † sent them from the lords, which that reverend body apprehended would be very injurious to them, if it passed into a law: and who, in the present session, defeated the arts and endeavours of schismaticks to repeal the sacramental test.

For although it has been allowed on all hands, that the former of those bills might, by its necessary consequences, be very displeasing to the lay gentlemen

* Many eminent clergymen who opposed this scheme applied to Dr. Swift to write against it, to which he readily consented upon their giving him some hints, and two days after the following Reasons were presented to several members of parliament, which had so good an effect that the bill was dropped.

† For the bishops to divide livings.

of

Digitized by Google

of the kingdom, for many reasons purely secular; and that this last attempt for repealing the test did much more affect at present the temporal interest than the spiritual; yet the whole body of the lower clergy have, upon both those occasions, expressed equal gratitude to that honourable house for their justice and steadiness, as if the clergy alone were to receive the benefit.

It must needs be therefore a great addition to the clergy's grief, that such an assembly as the present house of commons, should now, with an expedition more than usual, agree to a bill for encouraging the linen manufacture, with a clause whereby the church is to lose two parts in three of the legal tithe in flax and hemp.

Some reasons why the clergy think such a law will be a great hardship upon them are, I conceive, those that follow. I shall venture to enumerate them, with all deference due to that honourable assembly.

First, the clergy suppose that they have not by any fault or demerit, incurred the displeasure of the nation's representatives: neither can the declared loyalty of the present set, from the highest prelate to the lowest vicar, be in the least disputed: because there are hardly ten clergymen through the whole kingdom, for more than nineteen years past, who have not been either preferred entirely upon account of their declared affection to the Hanover line, or higher promoted as the due reward of the same merit.

There is not a landlord in the whole kingdom residing some part of the year at his country seat, who is not in his own conscience fully convinced, that the tithes of his minister have gradually sunk for some years past one third, or at least one fourth, of their former value, exclusive of all nonsolvencies.

The

Digitized by Google

The payment of tithes in this kingdom is subject to so many frauds, brangles, and other difficulties, not only from papists and dissenters, but even from those who profess themselves protestants; that, by the expense, the trouble, and vexation of collecting or bargaining for them, they are, of all other rents, the most precarious, uncertain, and ill paid.

The landlords in most parishes expect, as a compliment, that they shall pay little more than half the value of the tithes for the lands they hold in their own hands; which often consist of large domains: and it is the minister's interest to make them easy upon that article, when he considers what influence those gentlemen have upon their tenants.

The clergy cannot but think it extremely severe, that in a bill for encouraging the linen manufacture, they alone must be the sufferers, who can least afford it. If, as I am told, there be a tax of three thousand pounds a year paid by the publick, for a farther encouragement to the said manufacture, are not the clergy equal sharers in the charge with the rest of their fellow subjects? What satisfactory reason can be therefore given, why they alone should bear the whole additional weight, unless it will be alleged that their property is not upon an equal foot with the properties of other men? They acquire their own small pittance, by at least as honest means, as their neighbours the landlords possess their estates; and have been always supposed, except in rebellious or fanatical times, to have as good a title: for no families now in being can show a more ancient. Indeed if it be true, that some persons (I hope they were not many) were seen to laugh when the rights of the clery were mentioned; in this case, an opinion may possibly

Digitized by Google

possibly be soon advanced, that they have no rights at all. And this is likely enough to gain ground, in proportion as the contempt of all religion shall increase, which is already in a very forward way.

It is said, there will be also added in this bill, a clause for diminishing the tithe of hops, in order to cultivate that useful plant among us: and here likewise the load is to lie entirely on the shoulders of the clergy, while the landlords reap all the benefit. It will not be easy to foresee where such proceedings are likely to stop; or whether by the same authority, in civil times, a parliament may not as justly challenge the same power in reducing all things titheable, not below the tenth part of the product (which is and ever will be the clergy's equitable right) but from a tenth part to a sixtieth or eightieth, and from thence to nothing.

I have heard it granted by skilful persons, that the practice of taxing the clergy by parliament, without their own consent, is a new thing, not much above the date of seventy years: before which period, in times of peace, they always taxed themselves. But things are extremely altered at present: it is not now sufficient to tax them in common with their fellow subjects, without imposing an additional tax upon them, from which, or from any thing equivalent, all their fellow subjects are exempt; and this in a country professing Christianity.

The greatest part of the clergy throughout this kingdom have been stripped of their glebes, by the confusion of times, by violence, fraud, oppression, and other unlawful means; all which glebes are now in the hands of the laity. So that they now are generally forced to lie at the mercy of landlords, for a small

Digitized by Google

a small piece of ground in their parishes, at a most exorbitant rent, and usually for a short term of years, whereon to build a house, and enable them to reside. Yet, in spite of these disadvantages, I am a witness, that they are generally more constant residents, than their brethren in England; where the meanest vicar has a convenient dwelling, with a barn, a garden, and a field or two for his cattle; beside the certainty of his little income from honest farmers, able and willing not only to pay him his dues, but likewise to make him presents, according to their ability, for his better support. In all which circumstances the clergy of Ireland meet with a treatment directly contrary.

It is hoped the honourable house will consider, that it is impossible for the most ill minded, avaricious, or cunning clergyman, to do the least injustice to the meanest cottager in his parish, in any bargain for tithes, or other ecclesiastical dues. He can at the utmost only demand to have his tithes fairly laid out; and does not once in a hundred times obtain his demand. But every tenant, from the poorest cottager, to the most substantial farmer, can, and generally does impose upon the minister, by fraud, by theft, by lies, by perjuries, by insolence, and sometimes by force; notwithstanding the utmost vigilance and skill of himself and his proctor; insomuch that it is allowed, that the clergy in general, receive little more than one half of their legal dues; not including the charges they are at in collecting or bargaining for them.

The land rents of Ireland are computed to about two millions, whereof one tenth amounts to two hundred thousand pounds. The beneficed clergymen, excluding those of this city, are not reckoned to be above

Digitized by Google

above five hundred; by which computation they should each of them possess two hundred pounds a year, if those tithes were equally divided, although in well cultivated corn countries it ought to be more; whereas they hardly receive one half of that sum, with great defalcations, and in very bad payments. There are indeed a few glebes in the north pretty considerable; but if these, and all the rest, were in like manner equally divided, they would not add five pounds a year to every clergyman. Therefore, whether the condition of the clergy in general among us be justly liable to envy, or able to bear a heavy burden, which neither the nobility, nor gentry, nor tradesmen, nor farmers, will touch with one of their fingers; this, I say, is submitted to the honourable house.

One terrible circumstance in this bill is, that of turning the tithe of flax and hemp, into what the lawyers call a *modus*, or a certain sum in lieu of a tenth part of the product. And by this practice of claiming a *modus* in many parishes by ancient custom, the clergy in both kingdoms have been almost incredible sufferers. Thus in the present case, the tithe of a tolerable acre of flax, which by a medium is worth twelve shillings, is by the present bill reduced to four shillings. Neither is this the worst part in a *modus*; every determinate sum must in process of time sink from a fourth to a four and twentieth part, or a great deal lower, by that necessary fall attending the value of money; which is now at least nine tenths lower all over Europe, than it was four hundred years ago, by a gradual decline; and even a third part at least, within our own memories, in purchasing almost every thing required for the necessities or conveniencies

Digitized by Google

cies of life; as any gentleman can attest, who has kept house for twenty years past. And this will equally affect poor countries as well as rich. For, although I look upon it as an impossibility that this kingdom should ever thrive under its present disadvantages, which, without a miracle, must still increase; yet, when the whole cash of the nation shall sink to fifty thousand pounds, we must, in all our traffick abroad, either of import or export, go by the general rate, at which money is valued in those countries, that enjoy the common privileges of humankind. For this reason no corporation (if the clergy may presume to call themselves one) should by any means grant away their properties in perpetuity, upon any consideration whatsoever; which is a rock that many corporations have split upon, to their great impoverishment, and sometimes to their utter undoing: because they are supposed to subsist for ever, and because no determination of money is of any certain perpetual intrinsick value. This is known enough in England, where estates let for ever, some hundred years ago, by several ancient noble families, do not at this present pay their posterity a twentieth part of what they are now worth at an easy rent.

A tax affecting one part of a nation, which already bears its full share in all parliamentary impositions, cannot possibly be just, except it be inflicted as a punishment upon that body of men which is taxed, for some great demerit or danger to the publick apprehended from those upon whom it is laid: thus the papists and nonjurors have been doubly taxed, for refusing to give proper securities to the government; which cannot be objected against the clergy. And therefore, if this bill should pass, I think it ought to be

Digitized by Google

be with a preface, showing wherein they have offended, and for what disaffection or other crime they are punished.

If an additional excise upon ale, or a duty upon flesh and bread were to be enacted, neither the victualler, butcher, or baker would bear any more of the charge than for what themselves consumed, but it would be an equal general tax through the whole kingdom: whereas, by this bill, the clergy alone are avowedly condemned to be deprived of their ancient, inherent, undisputed rights, in order to encourage a manufacture, by which all the rest of the kingdom are supposed to be gainers.

This bill is directly against *magna charta*; whereof the first clause is, for confirming the inviolable rights of holy church; as well as contrary to the oath taken by all our kings at their coronation, where they swear to defend and protect the church in all its rights.

A tax laid upon employments is a very different thing. The possessors of civil and military employments are no corporation; neither are they any part of our constitution; their salaries, pay, and perquisites are all changeable at the pleasure of the prince who bestows them, although the army be paid from funds raised and appropriated by the legislature. But the clergy, as they have little reason to expect, so they desire no more than their ancient legal dues: only indeed with the removal of many grievous impediments in the collection of them; which it is to be feared they must wait for until more favourable times. It is well known that they have already, of their own accord, shown great indulgence to their people upon this very article of flax, seldom taking above a fourth part of their tithe for small parcels, and oftentimes

Digitized by Google

nothing at all from new beginners; waiting with patience until the farmers were able, and until greater quantities of land were employed in that part of husbandry; never suspecting that their good intentions should be perverted, in so singular a manner, to their detriment, by that very assembly, which, during the time that convocations (which are an original part of our constitution, ever since Christianity became national among us) are thought fit to be suspended, God knows for what reason, or from what provocations; I say from that very assembly, who, during the intervals of convocations, should rather be supposed to be guardians of the rights and properties of the clergy, than to make the least attempt upon either.

I have not heard upon inquiry, that any of those gentlemen, who among us without doors are called the court party, discover the least zeal in this affair. If they had thoughts to interpose, it might be conceived they would show their displeasure against this bill, which must very much lessen the value of the king's patronage upon promotion to vacant sees, in the disposal of deaneries, and other considerable preferments in the church, which are in the donation of the crown; whereby the viceroys will have fewer good preferments to bestow on their dependents, as well as upon the kindred of members, who may have a sufficient stock of that sort of merit, whatever it may be, which may in future times most prevail.

The dissenters, by not succeeding in their endeavours to procure a repeal of the test, have lost nothing, but continue in a full enjoyment of their toleration; while the clergy, without giving the least offence, are by this bill deprived of a considerable branch

Digitized by Google

branch of their ancient legal rights, whereby the schismatical party will have the pleasure of gratifying their revenge—*hoc Graii voluere.*

The farmer will find no relief by this *modus*, because, when his present lease shall expire, his landlord will infallibly raise the rent in an equal proportion upon every part of land where flax is sown, and have so much a better security for payment at the expense of the clergy.

If we judge by things past, it little avails that this bill is to be limited to a certain time of ten, twenty, or thirty years. For no landlord will ever consent that a law shall expire, by which he finds himself a gainer; and of this there are many examples, as well in England, as in this kingdom.

The great end of this bill, is, by proper encouragement to extend the linen manufacture into those counties where it has hitherto been little cultivated: but this encouragement of lessening the tithe of flax and hemp, is one of such a kind, as, it is to be feared, will have a directly contrary effect. Because, if I am rightly informed, no set of men has, for their number and fortunes, been more industrious and successful than the clergy, in introducing that manufacture into places which were unacquainted with it; by persuading their people to sow flax and hemp, by procuring seed for them, and by having them instructed in the management thereof; and this they did, not without reasonable hopes of increasing the value of their parishes after some time, as well as of promoting the benefit of the publick. But if this *modus* should take place, the clergy will be so far from gaining, that they will become losers by their extraordinary care, by having their best arable lands

Digitized by Google

turned to flax and hemp, which are reckoned great impoverishers of land: they cannot therefore be blamed, if they should show as much zeal to prevent its being introduced or improved in their parishes, as they hitherto have showed * in the introducing and improving of it. This, I am told, some of them have already declared; at least so far as to resolve not to give themselves any more trouble than other men about promoting a manufacture, by the success of which they only of all men are to be sufferers. Perhaps the giving even a farther encouragement than the law does, as it now stands, to a set of men, who might on many accounts be so useful to this purpose, would be no bad method of having the great end of the bill more effectually answered: but this is what they are are far from desiring; all they petition for, is no more than to continue on the same footing with the rest of their fellow subjects.

If this *modus* of paying by the acre be to pass into a law, it were to be wished, that the same law would not only appoint one or more sworn surveyors in each parish to measure the lands, on which flax and hemp are sown, but also settle the price of surveying, and determine whether the incumbent or farmer is to pay for each annual survey. Without something of this kind there must constantly be disputes between them, and the neighbouring justices of peace must be teased as often as those disputes happen.

I had written thus far, when a paper was sent to me with several reasons against the bill, some whereof, although they have been already touched, are put in a better light, and the rest did not occur to me. I shall deliver them in the author's own words.

* It should be—'have *shown*.'

I. That

Digitized by Google

I. That tithes are the patrimony of the church: and, if not of divine original, yet at least of great antiquity.

II. That all purchases and leases of titheable lands for many centuries past have been made and taken, subject to the demand of tithes, and those lands sold and taken just so much the cheaper on that account.

III. That if any lands are exempted from tithes, or the legal demands of such tithes lessened by act of parliament, so much value is taken from the proprietor of the tithes, and vested in the proprietor of the lands, or his head tenants.

IV. That no innocent unoffending person can be so deprived of his property, without the greatest violation of common justice.

V. That to do this upon a prospect of encouraging the linen or any other manufacture, is acting upon a very mistaken and unjust supposition; inasmuch as the price of the lands, so occupied, will be no way lessened to the farmer, by such a law.

VI. That the clergy are content cheerfully to bear (as they now do) any burden in common with their fellow subjects, either for the support of his majesty's government, or the encouragement of the trade of the nation; but think it very hard that they should be singled out to pay heavier taxes than others, at a time when, by the decrease of the value of their parishes, they are less able to bear them.

VII. That the legislature has heretofore distinguished the clergy by exemptions, and not by additional loads; and the present clergy of the kingdom, hope they have not deserved worse of the legislature, than their predecessors.

Digitized by Google

VIII. That, by the original constitution of these kingdoms, the clergy had the sole right of taxing themselves, and were in possession of that right as low as the Restoration; and if that right be now devolved upon the commons, by the cession of the clergy, the commons can be considered, in this case, in no other light, than as the guardians of the clergy.

IX. That, beside those tithes always in the possession of the clergy, there are some portions of tithes lately come into their possession by purchase; that if this clause should take place, they would not be allowed the benefit of these purchases, upon an equal foot of advantage, with the rest of their fellow subjects. And that some tithes in the hands of impropriators, are under settlements and mortgages.

X. That the gentlemen of this house should consider, that loading the clergy is loading their own younger brothers and children; with this additional grievance, that it is taking from the younger and poorer, to give to the elder and richer; and,

Lastly, That, if it were at any time just and proper to do this, it would however be too severe to do it now, when all the tithes of the kingdom are known, for some years past, to have sunk above one third part in their value.

Any income in the hands of the clergy, is at least as useful to the publick, as the same income in the hands of the laity.

It were more reasonable to grant the clergy in three parts of the nation an additional support, than to diminish their present subsistence.

Great employments are and will be in the hands of Englishmen; nothing left for the younger sons of Irish-

Digitized by Google

Irishmen, but vicarages, tidewaiters places, &c. therefore no reason to make them worse.

The *modus* upon the flax in England affects only lands reclaimed since the year 1690, and is at the rate of five shillings the English acre, which is equivalent to eight shillings and eightpence Irish, and that to be paid before the farmer removes it from the field. Flax is a manufacture of little consequence in England, but is the staple in Ireland; and if it increases (as it probably will) must in many places jostle out corn, because it is more gainful.

The clergy of the established church have no interest, like those of the church of Rome, distinct from the true interest of their country; and therefore ought to suffer under no distinct impositions or taxes of any kind.

The bill for settling the *modus* of flax in England, was brought in the first year of the reign of king George I, when the clergy lay very unjustly under the imputation of some disaffection; and to encourage the bringing in of some fens in Lincolnshire, which were not to be continued under flax; but it left all lands, where flax had been sown before that time, under the same condition of tithing, in which they were before the passing of that bill: whereas this bill takes away what the clergy are actually possessed of.

That the woollen manufacture is the staple of England, as the linen is that of Ireland; yet no attempt was ever made in England, to reduce the tithe of wool, for the encouragement of that manufacture. This manufacture has already been remarkably favoured by the clergy, who have hitherto been generally content with less than half, some with sixpence a garden, and some have taken nothing.

Employ-

Digitized by Google

Employments, they say, have been taxed; the reasons for which taxation will not hold with regard to property, at least till employments become inheritances. The commons always have had so tender a regard to property, that they never would suffer any law to pass, whereby any particular persons might be aggrieved without their own consent.

N. B. Some alterations have been made in the bill about the *modus*, since the above paper was written: but they are of little moment.

Digitized by Google

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

COURT AND EMPIRE OF JAPAN.

WRITTEN IN 1728.

REGOGE * was the thirty-fourth emperor of Japan, and began his reign in the year 341 of the Christian era, succeeding to Nena †, a princess who governed with great felicity.

There had been a revolution in that empire about twenty-six years before, which made some breaches in the hereditary line; and Regoge, successor to Nena, although of the royal family, was a distant relation.

There were two violent parties in the empire, which began in the time of the revolution above mentioned; and at the death of the empress Nena, were in the highest degree of animosity, each charging the other with a design of introducing new Gods, and changing the civil constitution. The names of these two parties were Husiges and Yortes ‡. The latter were those whom Nena the late empress most favoured toward the end of her reign, and by whose advice she governed.

* King George. † Queen Anne. ‡ Whigs and Tories.

The

Digitized by Google

The Husige faction, enraged at their loss of power, made private applications to Regoge, during the life of the empress; which prevailed so far, that upon her death, the new emperor wholly disgraced the Yortes, and employed only the Husiges in all his affairs. The Japanese author highly blames his imperial majesty's proceeding in this affair; because it was allowed on all hands, that he had then a happy opportunity of reconciling parties for ever, by a moderating scheme. But he, on the contrary, began his reign by openly disgracing the principal and most popular Yortes, some of which had been chiefly instrumental in raising him to the throne. By this mistaken step, he occasioned a rebellion: which, although it were soon quelled by some very surprising turns of fortune; yet the fear, whether real or pretended, of new attempts, engaged him in such immense charges, that instead of clearing any part of that prodigious debt, left on his kingdom by the former war, which might have been done, by any tolerable management, in twelve years of the most profound peace, he left his empire loaded with a vast addition to the old encumbrance.

This prince, before he succeeded to the empire of Japan, was king of Tedsu, a dominion seated on the continent, to the west side of Japan. Tedsu was the place of his birth, and more beloved by him than his new empire; for there he spent some months almost every year, and thither was supposed to have conveyed great sums of money, saved out of his imperial revenues.

There were two maritime towns of great importance bordering upon Tedsu: of these he purchased a litigated title; and to support it, was forced not only to entrench deeply on his Japanese revenues, but to engage

Digitized by Google

engage in alliances very dangerous to the Japanese empire.

Japan was at that time a limited monarchy, which, some authors are of opinion, was introduced there by a detachment from the numerous army of Brennus, who ravaged a great part of Asia; and those of them who fixed in Japan, left behind them that kind of military institution, which the northern people in ensuing ages carried through most parts of Europe; the generals becoming kings, the great officers a senate of nobles, with a representative from every centenary of private soldiers; and in the assent of the majority in these two bodies, confirmed by the general, the legislature consisted.

I need not farther explain a matter so universally known; but return to my subject.

The Husige faction, by a gross piece of negligence in the Yortes, had so far insinuated themselves and their opinions into the favour of Regoge, before he came to the empire, that this prince firmly believed them to be his only true friends, and the others his mortal enemies. By this opinion he governed all the actions of his reign.

The emperor died suddenly, in his journey to Tedsu; where, according to his usual custom, he was going to pass the summer.

This prince, during his whole reign, continued an absolute stranger to the language, the manners, the laws, and the religion of Japan; and passing his whole time among old mistresses, or a few privadoes, left the whole management of the empire in the hands of a minister, upon the condition of being made easy in his personal revenues, and the management of parties.

Digitized by Google

parties in the senate. His last minister*, who governed in the most arbitrary manner for several years, he was thought to hate more than he did any other person in Japan, except his only son, the heir to the empire. The dislike he bore to the former was, because the minister, under pretence that he could not govern the senate without disposing of employments among them, would not suffer his master to oblige one single person, but disposed of all to his own relations and dependents. But, as to that continued and virulent hatred he bore to the prince his son, from the beginning of his reign to his death, the historian has not accounted for it, farther than by various conjectures, which do not deserve to be related.

The minister above mentioned was of a family not contemptible, had been early a senator, and from his youth a mortal enemy to the Yortes. He had been formerly disgraced in the senate, for some frauds in the management of a publick trust. He was perfectly skilled, by long practice in the senatorial forms; and dextrous in the purchasing of votes, from those who could find their accounts better in complying with his measures, than they could probably lose by any tax that might be charged on the kingdom. He seemed to fail, in point of policy, by not concealing his gettings; never scrupling openly to lay out vast sums of money in paintings, buildings, and purchasing estates; when it was known that upon his first coming into business, upon the death of the empress Nena, his fortune was but inconsiderable. He had the most boldness, and the least magnanimity that ever any mortal was endowed with. By enriching his relations,

* Sir Robert Walpole.

friends,

Digitized by Google

friends, and dependents, in a most exorbitant manner, he was weak enough to imagine that he had provided a support against an evil day. He had the best among all false appearances of courage; which was, a most unlimited assurance, whereby he would swagger the boldest man into a dread of his power; but had not the smallest portion of magnanimity, growing jealous, and disgracing every man, who was known to bear the least civility to those he disliked. He had some small smattering in books, but no manner of politeness: nor, in his whole life, was ever known to advance any one person, upon the score of wit, learning, or abilities for business. The whole system of his ministry was corruption; and he never gave bribe or pension, without frankly telling the receivers what he expected from them, and threatening them to put an end to his bounty, if they failed to comply in every circumstance.

A few months before the emperor's death, there was a design concerted between some eminent persons of both parties, whom the desperate state of the empire had united, to accuse the minister at the first meeting of a new-chosen senate, which was then to assemble according to the laws of that empire. And it was believed, that the vast expense he must be at, in choosing an assembly proper for his purpose, added to the low state of the treasury, the increasing number of pensioners, the great discontent of the people, and the personal hatred of the emperor, would, if well laid open in the senate, be of weight enough to sink the minister, when it should appear to his very pensioners and creatures, that he could not supply them much longer.

While this scheme was in agitation, an account came

Digitized by Google

came of the emperor's death; and the prince his son *, with universal joy, mounted the throne of Japan.

The new emperor had always lived a private life, during the reign of his father; who, in his annual absence, never trusted him more than once with the reins of government, which he held so evenly, that he became too popular, to be confided in any more. He was thought not unfavourable to the Yortes, at least not altogether to approve the virulence, wherewith his father proceeded against them; and therefore, immediately upon his succession, the principal persons of that denomination came, in several bodies, to kiss the hem of his garment; whom he received with great courtesy, and some of them with particular marks of distinction.

The prince, during the reign of his father, having not been trusted with any publick charge, employed his leisure in learning the language, the religion, the customs, and disposition, of the Japanese; wherein he received great information, among others, from Nomtoc †, master of his finances, and president of the senate, who secretly hated Lelop-Aw, the minister; and likewise from Ramneh ‡, a most eminent senator, who, despairing to do any good with the father, had, with great industry, skill, and decency, used his endeavours to instil good principles into the young prince.

Upon the news of the former emperor's death, a grand council was summoned of course, where little passed beside directing the ceremony of proclaiming

* K. George II.

† Sir Spencer Compton, speaker of the house of commons.

‡ Sir Thomas Hanmer.

the

Digitized by Google

the successor. But, in some days after, the new emperor, having consulted with those persons in whom he could chiefly confide, and maturely considered in his own mind the present state of his affairs, as well as the disposition of his people, convoked another assembly of his council; wherein, after some time spent in general business, suitable to the present emergency, he directed Lelop-Aw to give him, in as short terms as he conveniently could, an account of the nation's debts, of his management in the senate, and his negotiations with foreign courts: which that minister having delivered, according to his usual manner, with much assurance and little satisfaction, the emperor desired to be fully satisfied in the following particulars.

Whether the vast expense of choosing such members into the senate, as would be content to do the publick business, were absolutely necessary.

Whether those members, thus chosen in, would cross and impede the necessary course of affairs, unless they were supplied with great sums of money and continued pensions?

Whether the same corruption and perverseness were to be expected from the nobles?

Whether the empire of Japan were in so low a condition, that the imperial envoys at foreign courts must be forced to purchase alliances, or prevent a war, by immense bribes given to the ministers of all the neighbouring princes?

Why the debts of the empire were so prodigiously advanced, in a peace of twelve years at home and abroad?

Whether the Yortes were universally enemies to the

Digitized by Google

religion and laws of the empire, and to the imperial family now reigning.

Whether those persons, whose revenues consist in lands, do not give surer pledges of fidelity to the publick, and are more interested in the welfare of the empire, than others, whose fortunes consist only in money?

And because Lelop-Aw, for several years past, had engrossed the whole administration, the emperor signified, that from him alone he expected an answer.

This minister, who had sagacity enough to cultivate an interest in the young prince's family, during the late emperor's life, received early intelligence from one of his emissaries, of what was intended at the council, and had sufficient time to frame as plausible an answer, as his cause and conduct would allow. However, having desired a few minutes to put his thoughts in order, he delivered them in the following manner:

"SIR,

"UPON this short unexpected warning, to answer your imperial majesty's queries, I should be "wholly at a loss, in your majesty's august presence, "and that of this most noble assembly, if I were "armed with a weaker defence than my own loyalty "and integrity, and the prosperous success of my "endeavours.

"It is well known, that the death of the empress "Nena, happened in a most miraculous juncture; "and that if she had lived two months longer, your "illustrious family would have been deprived of your right:

Digitized by Google

"right; and we should have seen an usurper upon "your throne, who would have wholly changed the "constitution of this empire, both civil and sacred; "and, although that empress died in a most opportune "season, yet the peaceable entrance of your majesty's "father, was effected by a continual series of miracles. "The truth of this appears, by that unnatural re- "bellion which the Yortes raised, without the least "provocation, in the first year of the late emperor's "reign; which may be sufficient to convince your "majesty, that every soul of that denomination, was, "is, and will be for ever, a favourer of the pretender, "a mortal enemy to your illustrious family, and an "introducer of new gods into the empire. Upon "this foundation was built the whole conduct of our "affairs: and since a great majority of the kingdom, "was at that time reckoned to favour the Yortes "faction, who, in the regular course of elections, "must certainly have been chosen members of the "senate then to be convoked; it was necessary, by "the force of money, to influence elections in such a "manner, that your majesty's father might have a "sufficient number, to weigh down the scale on his "side, and thereby carry on those measures, which "could only secure him and his family in the posses- "sion of the empire. To support this original plan, "I came into the service; but, the members of the "senate knowing themselves every day more neces- "sary, upon the choosing of a new senate, I found "the charges to increase; and that after they were "chosen, they insisted upon an increase of their pen- "sions; because they well knew, that the work could "not be carried on without them: and I was more "general in my donatives, because I thought it was

Digitized by Google

" more for the honour of the crown, that every vote " should pass without a division; and that when a " debate was proposed, it should immediately be " quashed by putting the question.

" SIR, The date of the present senate is expired, " and your imperial majesty is now to convoke a new " one; which, I confess, will be somewhat more ex- " pensive than the last, because the Yortes, from " your favourable reception, have begun to reassume " a spirit, whereof the country had some intelligence; " and we know, the majority of the people, without " proper management, would be still in that fatal " interest. However, I dare undertake, with the " charge only of four hundred thousand sprangs*, " to return as great a majority of senators of the true " stamp, as your majesty can desire. As to the " sums of money paid in foreign courts, I hope, in " some years, to ease the nation of them, when we " and our neighbours come to a good understand- " ing. However, I will be bold to say, they are " cheaper than a war, where your majesty is to be a " principal.

" The pensions indeed to senators and other per- " sons, must needs increase, from the restiveness " of some, and scrupulous nature of others; and " the new members, who are unpractised, must have " better encouragement. However, I dare under- " take to bring the eventual charge within eight " hundred thousand sprangs. But, to make this " easy, there shall be new funds raised, of which " I have several schemes ready, without taxing bread " or flesh, which shall be reserved to more pressing " occasions.

* About a million sterling.

" Your

Digitized by Google

" Your majesty knows, it is the laudable custom of " all Eastern princes, to leave the whole management " of affairs, both civil and military, to their visirs.

" The appointments for your family and private " purse, shall exceed those of your predecessors: you " shall be at no trouble, farther than to appear some- " times in council, and leave the rest to me: you " shall hear no clamour or complaints: your senate " shall, upon occasion, declare you the best of princes, " the father of your country, the arbiter of Asia, " the defender of the oppressed, and the delight of " mankind.

" SIR, Hear not those who would, most falsely, " impiously, and maliciously, insinuate that your go- " vernment can be carried on, without that wholesome " necessary expedient, of sharing the publick revenue " with your faithful deserving senators. This, I know, " my enemies are pleased to call bribery and corrup- " tion. Be it so: but I insist, that without this " bribery and corruption, the wheels of government " will not turn; or at least will be apt to take fire, " like other wheels, unless they be greased at proper " times. If an angel from Heaven should descend, " to govern this empire, upon any other scheme " than what our enemies call corruption, he must " return from whence he came, and leave the work " undone.

" SIR, It is well known we are a trading nation, and " consequently cannot thrive in a bargain, where " nothing is to be gained. The poor electors, who " run from their shops or the plough, for the ser- " vice of their country; are they not to be considered " for their labour and their loyalty? The candidates, " who, with the hazard of their persons, the loss

Digitized by Google

" of their characters, and the ruin of their fortunes, " are preferred to the senate, in a country where they " are strangers, before the very lords of the soil; " are they not to be rewarded for their zeal to " your majesty's service, and qualified to live in " your metropolis, as becomes the lustre of their " stations?

" SIR, If I have given great numbers of the most " profitable employments, among my own relations " and nearest allies, it was not out of any partiality; " but because I know them best, and can best depend " upon them. I have been at the pains to mould and " cultivate their opinions. Abler heads might pro- " bably have been found; but they would not be " equally under my direction. A huntsman who has " the absolute command of his dogs, will hunt more " effectually, than with a better pack, to whose man- " ner and cry he is a stranger.

" SIR, Upon the whole, I will appeal to all those " who best knew your royal father, whether that " blessed monarch had ever one anxious thought for " the publick, or disappointment, or uneasiness, or " want of money for all his occasions, during the " time of my administration? And how happy the " people confessed themselves to be, under such a " king, I leave to their own numerous addresses; " which all politicians will allow, to be the most in- " fallible proof, how any nation stands affected to " their sovereign."

Lelop-Aw, having ended his speech, and struck his forehead thrice against the table, as the custom is in Japan, sat down with great complacency of mind, and much applause of his adherents, as might be

Digitized by Google

be observed by their countenances and their whispers. But the emperor's behaviour was remarkable; for, during the whole harangue, he appeared equally attentive and uneasy. After a short pause, his majesty commanded that some other counsellor should deliver his thoughts, either to confirm or object against what had been spoken by Lelop-Aw.

Digitized by Google

A

LETTER

ON

MR. M'CULLA'S PROJECT

ABOUT

HALFPENCE,

AND A NEW ONE PROPOSED.

IN A LETTER TO DR. DELANY,

WRITTEN IN 1729.

SIR,

YOU desire to know my opinion concerning Mr. M'Culla's project, of circulating notes, stamped on copper, that shall pass for the value of halfpence and pence. I have some knowledge of the man; and, about a month ago, he brought me his book, with a couple of his halfpenny notes: but I was then out of order, and he could not be admitted. Since that time, I called at his house, where I discoursed the whole affair with him as thoroughly as I could. I am altogether a stranger to his character. He talked to me in the usual style, with a great profession of zeal for the publick good; which is the common cant of all projectors in their bills, from a first minister of state down

to

Digitized by Google

to a corncutter. But I stopped him short, as I would have done a better man; because it is too gross a practice to pass at any time, and especially in this age, where we all know one another so well. Yet, whoever proposes any scheme, which may prove to be a publick benefit, I shall not quarrel, if it prove likewise very beneficial to himself. It is certain, that, next to the want of silver, our greatest distress in point of coin is the want of small change, which may be some poor relief for the defect of the former, since the crown will not please to take that work upon them here, as they do in England. One thing in M'Culla's book is certainly right, that no law hinders me from giving a payable note upon leather, wood, copper, brass, iron, or any other material (except gold or silver) as well as upon paper. The question is, whether I can sue him on a copper bond, where there is neither hand nor seal, nor witnesses to prove it. To supply this, he has proposed, that the materials upon which this note is written, shall be in some degree of value equal to the debt. But that is one principal matter to be inquired into. His scheme is this:

He gives you a piece of copper for a halfpenny or penny, stamped with a promissory note to pay you twenty pence for every pound of copper notes, whenever you shall return them. Eight and forty of these halfpenny pieces are to weigh a pound; and he sells you that pound, coined and stamped, for two shillings: by which he clearly gains a little more than 16 *per cent*, that is to say, two pence in every shilling.

This will certainly arise to a great sum, if he should circulate as large a quantity of his notes as the kingdom, under the great dearth of silver, may very probably

Digitized by Google

bably require: enough indeed to make any Irish tradesman's fortune; which, however, I should not repine at in the least, if we could be sure of his fair dealing. It was obvious for me to raise the common objection, why Mr. M'Culla would not give security to pay the whole sum to any man who returned him his copper notes, as my lord Dartmouth and colonel Moor were, by their patents, obliged to do. To which he gave me some answers plausible enough. First, "He conceived his coins were much nearer to "the intrinsick value, than any of those coined by pa- "tents, the bulk and goodness of the metal equalling "the best English halfpence made by the crown: "That he apprehended the ill will of envious and de- "signing people: who, if they found him to have a "great vent for his notes, since he wanted the pro- "tection of a patent, might make a run upon him, "which he could not be able to support: And lastly, "that, his copper (as is already said) being equal in "value and bulk to the English halfpence, he did not "apprehend they should ever be returned, unless a "combination, proceeding from spite and envy, might "be formed against him."

But there are some points in his proposal which I cannot well answer for; nor do I know whether he will be able to do it himself. The first is, whether the copper he gives us will be as good as what the crown provided for the English halfpence and farthings; and, secondly, whether he will always continue to give us as good; and thirdly, when he will think fit to stop his hand, and give us no more? for I should be as sorry to be at the mercy of Mr. M'Culla, as of Mr. Wood.

There is another difficulty of the last importance. It

Digitized by Google

It is known enough that the crown is supposed to be neither gainer nor loser by coinage of any metal: for they subtract, or ought to subtract, no more from the intrinsick value than what will just pay the charges of the mint; and how much that will amount to is the question. By what I could gather from Mr. M'Culla, good copper is worth fourteen pence *per* pound. By this computation, if he sells his copper notes for two shillings the pound, and will pay twenty pence back, then the expense of coinage for one pound of copper must be sixpence, which is 30 *per cent.* The world should be particularly satisfied on this article, before he vends notes; for the discount of 30 *per cent* is prodigious, and vastly more than I can conceive it ought to be. For, if we add to that proportion the 16 *per cent*, which he avows to keep for his own profit, there will be a discount of about 46 *per cent.* Or, to reckon, I think, a fairer way: whoever buys a pound of Mr. M'Culla's coin, at two shillings *per* pound, carries home only the real value of fourteen pence, which is a pound of copper; and thus he is a loser of 41. 13s. 4d. *per cent.* But, however, this high discount of 30 *per cent* will be no objection against M'Culla's proposal; because, if the charge of coinage will honestly amount to so much, and we suppose his copper notes may be returned upon him, he will be the greater sufferer of the two; because the buyer can lose but fourpence in a pound, and M'Culla must lose sixpence, which was the charge of the coinage.

Upon the whole, there are some points which must be settled to the general satisfaction, before we can safely take Mr. M'Culla's copper notes for value received; and how he will give that satisfaction, is not within

Digitized by Google

within my knowledge or conjecture. The first point is, that we shall be always sure of receiving good copper, equal in bulk and fineness to the best English halfpence.

The second point is, to know what allowance he makes to himself, either out of the weight or mixture of his copper, or both, for the charge of coinage. As to the weight, the matter is easy by his own scheme; for, as I have said before, he proposes forty-eight to weigh a pound, which he gives you for two shillings, and receives it by the pound at twentypence: so that, supposing pure copper to be fourteenpence a pound, he makes you pay 30 *per cent* for the labour of coining, as I have already observed, beside 16 *per cent* when he sells it. But if to this he adds any alloy, to debase the metal, although it be not above 10 *per cent*; then Mr. M'Culla's promissory notes will, to the intrinsick value of the metal, be above 47 *per cent* discount.

For, subtracting 10 *per cent* off sixty pounds worth of copper, it will (to avoid fractions) be about five and a half *per cent* in the whole 100l., which, added

to - - -	41	13	4
	5	10	0
will be *per cent*	47	3	4

That we are under great distress for change; and that Mr. M'Culla's copper notes, on supposition of the metal being pure, are less liable to objection than the project of Wood, may be granted: but such a discount, where we are not sure even of our twenty-pence a pound, appears hitherto a dead weight on his scheme.

Since

Digitized by Google

Since I writ this, calling to mind that I had some copper halfpence by me, I weighed them with those of Mr. M'Culla, and observed as follows.

First, I weighed Mr. M'Culla's halfpenny against an English one of king Charles II; which outweighed Mr. M' Culla's a fourth part, or 25 *per cent.*

I likewise weighed an Irish Patrick and David halfpenny, which outweighed Mr. M'Culla's 12½ *per cent.* It had a very fair and deep impression, and milled very skilfully round.

I found that even a common harp halfpenny, well preserved, weighed equal to Mr. M'Culla's. And even some of Wood's halfpence were near equal in weight to his. Therefore, if it be true that he does not think Wood's copper to have been faulty, he may probably give us no better.

I have laid these loose thoughts together with little order, to give you, and others who may read them, an opportunity of digesting them better. I am no enemy to Mr. M'Culla's project; but I would have it put upon a better foot. I own that this halfpenny of king Charles II, which I weighed against Mr. M'Culla's, was of the fairest kind I had seen. However, it is plain, the crown could afford it without being a loser. But it is probable that the officers of the mint were then more honest than they have since thought fit to be; for I confess not to have met those of any other year so weighty, or in appearance of so good metal, among all the copper coins of the three last reigns; yet these, however, did much outweigh those of Mr. M'Culla; for I have tried the experiment on a hundred of them. I have indeed seen accidentally one or two very light: but it must certainly have been done by chance; or rather I suppose them to be

Digitized by Google

be counterfeits. Be that as it will, it is allowed on all hands, that good copper was never known to be cheaper than it is at present. I am ignorant of the price, farther than by his informing me that it is only fourteen pence a pound; by which, I observe, he charges the coinage at 30 *per cent*; and therefore I cannot but think his demands are exorbitant. But, to say the truth, the dearness or cheapness of the metal does not properly enter into the question. What we desire is, that it should be of the best kind, and as weighty as can be afforded; that the profit of the contriver should be reduced from 16 to 8 *per cent*, and the charge of coinage, if possible, from 30 to 10, or 15 at most.

Mr. M'Culla must also give good security that he will coin only a determinate sum, not exceeding twenty thousand pounds; by which, although he should deal with all uprightness imaginable, and make his coin as good as that I weighed of king Charles II, he will, at 16 *per cent*, gain three thousand two hundred pounds: a very good additional job to a private tradesman's fortune!

I must advise him also to employ better workmen, and make his impressions deeper and plainer; by which a rising rim may be left about the edge of his coin, to preserve the letter from wearing out too soon. He has no wardens, or masters, or other officers of the mint, to suck up his profit; and, therefore, can afford to coin cheaper than the crown, if he will but find good materials, proper implements, and skilful workmen.

Whether this project will succeed in Mr. M'Culla's hands (which, if it be honestly executed, I should be glad to see) one thing I am confident of, that it might

Digitized by Google

might be easily brought to perfection by a society of nine or ten honest gentlemen of fortune, who wish well to their country, and would be content to be neither gainers nor losers, farther than the bare interest of their money. And Mr. M'Culla, as being the first starter of the scheme, might be considered and rewarded by such a society; whereof, although I am not a man of fortune, I should think it an honour and happiness to be one, even with borrowed money upon the best security I could give. And, first, I am confident, without any skill but by general reason, that the charge of coining copper would be very much less than 30 *per cent.* Secondly, I believe ten thousand pounds, in halfpence and farthings, would be sufficient for the whole kingdom, even under our great and most unnecessary distress for the want of silver; and that, without such a distress, half the sum would suffice. For, I compute and reason thus: the city of Dublin, by a gross computation, contains ten thousand families; and I am told by shopkeepers, "That, if silver were as plenty as "usual, two shillings in copper would be sufficient, "in the course of business, for each family." But, in consideration of the want of silver, I would allow five shillings to each family, which would amount to 2500l.; and, to help this, I would recommend a currency of all the genuine undefaced harp halfpence, which are left of lord Dartmouth's and Moor's patents under king Charles II; and the small Patrick and David for farthings. To the rest of the kingdom, I would assign the 7500l. remaining; reckoning Dublin to answer one fourth of the kingdom, as London is judged to answer (if I mistake not) one third

Digitized by Google

third of England; I mean in the view of money only.

To compute our want of small change by the number of souls in the kingdom, beside being perplexed, is, I think, by no means just. They have been reckoned at a million and a half: whereof a million at least are beggars in all circumstances except that of wandering about for alms, and that circumstance may arrive soon enough, when it will be time to add another ten thousand pounds in copper. But, without doubt, the families of Ireland, who lie chiefly under the difficulties of wanting small change, cannot be above forty or fifty thousand; which the sum of ten thousand pounds, with the addition of the fairest old halfpence, would tolerably supply: for, if we give too great a loose to any projector to pour in upon us what he pleases, the kingdom will be (how shall I express it under our present circumstances?) more than undone.

And hence appears, in a very strong light, the villany of Wood, who proposed the coinage of one hundred and eighty thousand pounds in copper, for the use of Ireland: whereby every family in the kingdom would be loaded with ten or a dozen shillings, although Wood might not transgress the bounds of his patent, and although no counterfeits, either at home or abroad, were added to the number; the contrary to both which would indubitably have arrived. So ill informed are great men on the other side, who talk of a million with as little ceremony as we do of half a crown!

But, to return to the proposal I have made: suppose ten gentlemen, lovers of their country, should raise 200l. apiece; and, from the time the money is depo-

Digitized by Google

deposited as they shall agree, should begin to charge it with seven *per cent* for their own use: that they should, as soon as possible, provide a mint and good workmen, and buy copper sufficient for coining two thousand pounds, subtracting a fifth part of the interest of ten thousand pounds for the charges of the tools, and fitting up a place for a mint; the other four parts of the same interest to be subtracted equally out of the four remaining coinages of 2000l. each, with a just allowance for other necessary incidents. Let the charge of coinage be fairly reckoned; and the kingdom informed of it, as well as of the price of copper. Let the coin be as well and deeply stamped as it ought. Let the metal be as pure as can consist to have it rightly coined (wherein I am wholly ignorant) and the bulk as large as that of king Charles II. And let this club of ten gentlemen give their joint security to receive all the coins they issue out for seven or ten years, and return gold and silver without any defalcation.

Let the same club, or company, when they have issued out the first two thousand pounds, go on the second year, if they find a demand, and that their scheme has answered to their own intention as well as to the satisfaction of the publick. And, if they find seven *per cent* not sufficient, let them subtract eight, beyond which I would not have them go. And when they have in two years, coined ten thousand pounds, let them give publick notice that they will proceed no farther, but shut up their mint, and dismiss their workmen; unless the real, universal, unsolicited declaration of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom shall signify a desire that they should go on for a certain sum farther.

 This

Digitized by Google

This company may enter into certain regulations among themselves; one of which should be, to keep nothing concealed, and duly to give an account to the world of their whole methods of acting.

Give me leave to compute, wholly at random, what charge the kingdom will be at, by the loss of intrinsick value in the coinage of 10000l. in copper, under the management of such a society of gentlemen.

First, It is plain, that instead of somewhat more than 16 *per cent*, as demanded by Mr. M'Culla, this society desires but 8 *per cent*.

Secondly, Whereas Mr. M'Culla charges the expense of coinage at 30 *per cent*, I hope and believe this society will be able to perform it at 10.

Whereas it does not appear that Mr. M'Culla can give any security for the goodness of his copper, because not one in ten thousand have the skill to distinguish; the society will be all engaged that theirs shall be of the best standard.

Fourthly, That whereas Mr. M'Culla's halfpence are one fourth part lighter than that kind coined in the time of king Charles II, these gentlemen will oblige themselves to the publick, to give the coin of the same weight and goodness with those halfpence, unless they shall find they cannot afford it; and, in that case, they shall beforehand inform the publick, show their reasons, and signify how large they can make them without being losers; and so give over or pursue their scheme, as they find the opinion of the world to be. However, I do not doubt but they can afford them as large, and of as good metal, as the best English halfpence that have been coined in the three last reigns, which very much outweigh those of Mr. M'Culla. And this advantage will arise in proportion,

Digitized by Google

portion, by lessening the charge of coinage from 30 *per cent* to 10 or 15, or 20 at most. But I confess myself in the dark on that article: only I think it impossible it should amount to any proportion near 30 *per cent*; otherwise the coiners of those counterfeit halfpence called raps would have little encouragement to follow their trade.

But the indubitable advantages, by having the management in such a society, would be the paying 8 *per cent* instead of 16, the being sure of the goodness and just weight of the coin, and the period to be put to any farther coinage than what was absolutely necessary to supply the wants and desires of the kingdom: and all this under the security of ten gentlemen of credit and fortune, who would be ready to give the best security and satisfaction, that they had no design to turn the scheme into a job.

As to any mistakes I have made in computation, they are of little moment; and I shall not descend so low as to justify them against any caviller.

The strongest objections against what I offer, and which perhaps may make it appear visionary, is the difficulty to find half a score gentlemen, who, out of a publick spirit, will be at the trouble, for no more profit than one *per cent* above the legal interest, to be overseers of a mint for five years; and perhaps, without any justice, raise the clamour of the people against them. Besides, it is most certain that many a squire is as fond of a job, and as dextrous to make the best of it, as Mr. M'Culla himself, or any of his level. However, I do not doubt but there may be ten such persons in this town, if they had only some visible mark to know them at sight. Yet I just foresee another inconveniency; that knavish men are

Digitized by Google

fitter to deal with others of their own denomination; while those who are honest and best intentioned may be the instruments of as much mischief to the publick, for want of cunning, as the greatest knaves; and more, because of the charitable opinion which they are apt to have of others. Therefore, how to join the prudence of the serpent, with the innocency of the dove, in this affair, is the most difficult point. It is not so hard to find an honest man, as to make this honest man active, and vigilant, and skilful; which, I doubt, will require a spur of profit greater than my scheme will afford him, unless he will be contented with the honour of serving his country, and the reward of a good conscience.

After reviewing what I had written, I see very well that I have not given any allowance for the first charge of preparing all things necessary for coining, which, I am told, will amount to about 200l., beside 20l. *per annum* for five years rent of a house to work in. I can only say, that, this making in all 300l., it will be an addition of no more than 3 *per cent* out of 10000l.

But the great advantages to the publick, by having the coinage placed in the hands of ten gentlemen such as I have already described (if such are to be found) are these:

First, They propose no other gain to themselves than 1 *per cent* above the legal interest for the money they advance; which will hardly afford them coffee when they meet at their minthouse.

Secondly, They bind themselves to make their coins of as good copper as the best English halfpence, and as well coined, and of equal weight: and do likewise bind themselves to charge the publick with not one

Digitized by Google

one farthing for the expense of coinage, more than it shall really stand them in.

Thirdly, They will, for a limited term of seven or ten years, as shall be thought proper upon mature consideration, pay gold and silver, without any defalcation, for all their own coin that shall be returned upon their hands.

Fourthly, They will take care that the coins shall have a deep impression, leaving a rising rim on both sides, to prevent their being defaced in a long time; and the edges shall be milled.

I suppose they need not be very apprehensive of counterfeits, which it will be difficult to make so as not to be discovered: for it is plain that those bad halfpence called raps, are so easily distinguished, even from the most worn genuine halfpenny, that nobody will now take them for a farthing, although under the great present want of change.

I shall here subjoin some computations relating to Mr. M'Culla's copper notes. They were sent to me by a person well skilled in such calculations: and therefore I refer them to the reader.

Mr. M'Culla charges good copper at fourteenpence *per* pound; but I know not whether he means avoirdupois or Troy weight.

avoirdupois is sixteen ounces to a pound 6960 grains.
A pound Troy weight - 5760 grains.

Mr. M'Culla's copper is fourteenpence *per* pound avoirdupois.

Two of Mr. M'Culla's penny notes, one with another, weigh - - 524 grains.

Digitized by Google

By which computation, two shillings of his notes, which he sells for one pound weight, will weigh - 6288 grains.
But one pound avoirdupois weighs, as above - - - 6960 grains.

This difference makes 10 *per cent* to Mr. M'Culla's profit, in point of weight.

The old Patrick and David halfpenny weighs - - - 149 grains.
Mr. M'Culla's halfpenny weighs 131 grains.

The difference is 18

Which is equal to $10\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.*

The English halfpenny of king Charles II weighs - - 167 grains.
M'Culla's halfpenny weighs - - 131 grains.

The difference 36

Which difference allowed, a fifth part is 20 *per cent.*

ANOTHER COMPUTATION.

Mr. M'Culla allows his pound of copper (coinage included) to be worth twentypence; for which he demands two shillings.

His coinage he computes at sixpence *per* pound weight; therefore, laying out only twentypence, and gaining fourpence, he makes *per cent* profit 20
The sixpence *per* pound weight, allowed for coinage, makes *per cent* - - 30
The want of weight in his halfpenny, compared as above, is *per cent* - 10
By all which (viz. coinage, profit, and want of weight) the publick loses *per cent* - 60

If

Digitized by Google

If Mr. M'Culla's coins will not pass, and he refuses to receive them back, the owner cannot sell them at above twelvepence *per* pound; whereby, with the defect of weight of 10 *per cent* he will lose 60 *per cent.*

The scheme of the society, raised as high as it can possibly be, will be only thus:

For interest of their money *per cent* -	8
For coinage, instead of 10, suppose, at most, *per cent* - - -	20
For 300l. laid out for tools, a mint, and house rent, charge 3 *per cent* upon the coinage of 10000l. - -	3
Charges in all, upon interest, coinage, &c. *per cent* - - -	31

Which, with all the advantages above-mentioned, of the goodness of the metal, the largeness of the coin, the deepness and fairness of the impression, the assurance of the society confining itself to such a sum as they undertake, or as the kingdom shall approve; and lastly, their paying in gold or silver for all their coin returned upon their hands, without any defalcation, would be of mighty benefit to the kingdom; and, with a little steadiness and activity, could, I doubt not, be easily compassed.

I would not in this scheme recommend the method of promissory notes, after Mr. M'Culla's manner; but, as I have seen in old Irish coins, the words CIVITAS DVBLIN. on one side, with the year of our Lord and the Irish harp on the reverse.

Digitized by Google

A

LETTER

TO THE

WRITER

OF THE

OCCASIONAL PAPER.

[SEE THE CRAFTSMAN, 1727.]

SIR,

ALTHOUGH, in one of your papers, you declare an intention of turning them, during the dead season of the year, into accounts of domestick and foreign intelligence; yet, I think, we your correspondents should not understand your meaning so literally, as if you intended to reject inserting any other paper, which might probably be useful for the publick. Neither indeed am I fully convinced, that this new course you resolve to take, will render you more secure than your former laudable practice, of inserting such speculations, as were sent you by several well-wishers to the good of the kingdom; however grating such notices might be to some, who wanted neither power nor inclination to resent them at your cost: for, since there is a direct law against spreading false news, if you should venture to tell us in one of the Craftsmen that

Digitized by Google

that the dey of Algiers had got the tooth-ach, or the king of Bantam had taken a purge; and the facts should be contradicted in succeeding packets; I do not see what plea you could offer, to avoid the utmost penalty of the law, because you are not supposed to be very gracious among those who are most able to hurt you.

Besides, as I take your intentions to be sincerely meant for the publick service; so your original method of entertaining and instructing us, will be more general, and more useful in this season of the year, when people are retired to amusements more cool, more innocent, and much more reasonable, than those they have left; when their passions are subsided or suspended; when they have no occasions of inflaming themselves, or each other: where they will have opportunity of hearing common sense, every day in the week, from their tenants or neighbouring farmers; and thereby be qualified, in hours of rain or leisure, to read and consider the advice or information you shall send them.

Another weighty reason why you should not alter your manner of writing, by dwindling to a newsmonger, is, because there is no suspension of arms agreed on between you and your adversaries; who fight with a sort of weapons which have two wonderful qualities, that they are never to be worn out, and are best wielded by the weakest hands, and which the poverty of our language forces me to call, by the trite appellations of scurrility, slander, and Billingsgate. I am far from thinking that these gentlemen, or rather their employers, (for the operators themselves are too obscure to be guessed at) should be answered after their own way, although it were possible to drag them out

Digitized by Google

out of their obscurity: but I wish you would inquire what real use such a conduct is, to the cause they have been so largely paid to defend. The author of the three first Occasional Letters, a person altogether unknown, has been thought to glance (for what reasons he best knows) at some publick proceedings, as if they were not agreeable to his private opinions. In answer to this, the pamphleteers retained on the other side, are instructed by their superiours, to single out an adversary, whose abilities they have most reason to apprehend; and to load himself, his family, and friends, with all the infamy, that a perpetual conversation in Bridewell, Newgate, and the stews, could furnish them; but, at the same time, so very unluckily, that the most distinguishing parts of their characters, strike directly in the face of their benefactor; whose idea, presenting itself along with his guineas perpetually to their imagination, occasioned this desperate blunder.

But, allowing this heap of slander to be truth, and applied to the proper person; what is to be the consequence? Are our publick debts to be the sooner paid; the corruptions that author complains of, to be the sooner cured; an honourable peace, or a glorious war, the more likely to ensue; trade to flourish; the Ostend company to be demolished; Gibraltar and Port Mahon left entire in our possession; the balace of Europe to be preserved; the malignity of parties to be for ever at an end; none but persons of merit, virtue, genius, and learning, to be encouraged? I ask whether any of these effects will follow, upon the publication of this author's libel, even supposing he could prove every syllable of it to be true?

At

Digitized by Google

At the same time, I am well assured, that the only reason of ascribing those papers to a particular person, is built upon the information of a certain pragmatical spy of quality, well known to act in that capacity, by those, into whose company he insinuates himself; a sort of persons, who, although without much love, esteem, or dread of people in present power, yet have too much common prudence, to speak their thoughts with freedom, before such an intruder; who, therefore, imposes grossly upon his masters, if he makes them pay for any thing but his own conjectures.

It is a grievous mistake in a great minister to neglect or despise, much more to irritate men of genius and learning. I have heard one of the wisest persons in my time observe, that an administration was to be known and judged, by the talents of those who appeared their advocates in print. This I must never allow to be a general rule; yet I cannot but think it prodigiously unfortunate, that among the answerers, defenders, repliers, and panegyrists, started up in defence of present persons and proceedings, there has not yet arisen one, whose labours we can read with patience, however we may applaud their loyalty and good will: and all this, with the advantages of constant ready pay, of natural and acquired venom, and a grant of the whole fund of slander, to range over and riot in as they please.

On the other side, a turbulent writer of Occasional Letters, and other vexatious papers, in conjunction perhaps with one or two friends as bad as himself, is able to disconcert, tease, and sour us, whenever he thinks fit, merely by the strength of genius and truth; and after so dextrous a manner, that when we are vexed to the soul, and well know the reasons why we

are

Digitized by Google

are so, we are ashamed to own the first, and cannot tell how to express the other. In a word it seems to me that all the writers are on one side, and all the railers on the other.

However, I do not pretend to assert that it is impossible for an ill minister to find men of wit, who may be drawn, by a very valuable consideration, to undertake his defence: but the misfortune is, that the heads of such writers rebel against their hearts; their genius forsakes them, when they would offer to prostitute it to the service of injustice, corruption, party rage, and false representation of things and persons.

And this is the best argument I can offer in defence of great men, who have been of late so very unhappy in the choice of their paper-champions: although I cannot much commend their good husbandry, in those exorbitant payments, of twenty, and sixty guineas at a time, for a scurvy pamphlet; since the sort of work they require, is what will all come within the talents of any one, who has enjoyed the happiness of a very bad education, has kept the vilest company, is endowed with a servile spirit, is master of an empty purse, and a heart full of malice.

But, to speak the truth in soberness; it should seem a little hard, since the old whiggish principle has been recalled, of standing up for the liberty of the press, to a degree that no man, for several years past, durst venture out a thought, which did not square to a point, with the maxims and practices that then prevailed: I say, it is a little hard, that the vilest mercenaries should be countenanced, preferred, rewarded, for discharging their brutalities against men of honour, only upon a bare conjecture.

If it should happen that these profligates have attack ed

Digitized by Google

tacked an innocent person, I ask, what satisfaction can their hirers give in return? Not all the wealth raked together by the most corrupt rapacious ministers, in the longest course of unlimited power, would be sufficient to atone for the hundredth part of such an injury.

In the common way of thinking, it is a situation sufficient in all conscience to satisfy a reasonable ambition, for a private person to command the laws, the forces, the revenues of a great kingdom; to reward and advance his followers and flatterers as he pleases, and to keep his enemies (real or imaginary) in the dust. In such an exaltation, why should he be at the trouble to make use of fools to sound his praises, (because I always thought the lion was hard set, when he chose the ass for his trumpeter) or knaves to revenge his quarrel, at the expense of innocent men's reputations?

With all those advantages, I cannot see why persons in the height of power, should be under the least concern on account of their reputation, for which they have no manner of use; or to ruin that of others, which may perhaps be the only possession their enemies have left them. Supposing times of corruption, which I am very far from doing; if a writer displays them in their proper colours, does he do any thing worse than sending customers to the shop? "Here only, at "the sign of the Brazen Head, are to be sold places "and pensions: beware of counterfeits, and take care "of mistaking the door."

For my own part, I think it very unnecessary to give the character of a great minister in the fullness of his power, because it is a thing that naturally does itself, and is obvious to the eyes of all mankind: for his

Digitized by Google

his personal qualities are all derived into the most minute parts of his administration. If this be just, prudent, regular, impartial, intent upon the publick good, prepared for present exigencies, and provident of the future; such is the director himself in his private capacity: if it be rapacious, insolent, partial, palliating long and deep diseases of the publick, with empirical remedies, false, disguised, impudent, malicious, revengeful; you shall infallibly find the private life of the conductor, to answer in every point: nay, what is more, every twinge of the gout or gravel, will be felt in their consequences by the community: as the thief-catcher, upon viewing a house broke open, could immediately distinguish, from the manner of the workmanship, by what hand it was done.

It is hard to form a maxim against which an exception is not ready to start up; so, in the present case, where the minister grows enormously rich, the publick is proportionably poor; as, in a private family, the steward always thrives the fastest, when his lord is running out. * * * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Digitized by Google

OF

PUBLICK ABSURDITIES

IN

ENGLAND.

IT is a common topick of satire, which you will hear not only from the mouths of ministers of state, but of every whiffler in office, that half a dozen obscure fellows, over a bottle of wine or a dish of coffee, shall presume to censure the actions of parliaments and councils, to form schemes of government, and new-model the commonwealth; and this is usually ridiculed as a pragmatical disposition to politicks, in the very nature and genius of the people. It may possibly be true: and yet I am grossly deceived if any sober man, of very moderate talents, when he reflects upon the many ridiculous hurtful maxims, customs, and general rules of life, which prevail in this kingdom, would not with great reason be tempted, according to the present turn of his humour, either to laugh, lament, or be angry; or, if he were sanguine enough, perhaps to dream of a remedy. It is the mistake of wise and good men, that they expect more reason and virtue from human nature, than, taking it in the bulk, it is in any sort capable of. Whoever has been present at councils or assemblies of any sort, if he be a man of common prudence, cannot but have observed

Digitized by Google

served such results and opinions to have frequently passed a majority, as he would be ashamed to advance in private conversation. I say nothing of cruelty, oppression, injustice, and the like, because these are fairly to be accounted for in all assemblies, as best gratifying the passions and interests of leaders; which is a point of such high consideration, that all others must give place to it. But I would be understood here to speak only of opinions ridiculous, foolish, and absurd; with conclusions and actions suitable to them, at the same time when the most reasonable propositions are often unanimously rejected. And as all assemblies of men are liable to this accusation, so likewise there are natural absurdities from which the wisest states are not exempt; which proceed less from the nature of their climate, than that of their government; the Gauls, the Britons, the Spaniards, and Italians, having retained very little of the characters given them in ancient history.

By these, and the like reflections, I have been often led to consider some publick absurdities in our own country, most of which are, in my opinion, directly against the rules of right reason, and are attended with great inconveniencies to the state. I shall mention such of them as come into memory, without observing any method; and I shall give my reason why I take them to be absurd in their nature, and pernicious in their consequence.

It is absurd that any person, who professes a different form of worship, from that which is national, should be trusted with a vote for electing members into the house of commons: because every man is full of zeal for his own religion, although he regards not morality; and therefore will endeavour to his utmost,

Digitized by Google

utmost, to bring in a representative of his own principles, which, if they be popular, may endanger the religion established; and which, as it has formerly happened, may alter the whole frame of government.

A standing army in England, whether in time of peace or war, is a direct absurdity: for it is no part of our business to be a warlike nation, otherwise than by our fleets. In foreign wars we have no concern, farther than in junction with allies, whom we may either assist by sea, or by foreign troops paid with our money: but mercenary troops in England, can be of no use, except to awe senates, and thereby promote arbitrary power, in a monarchy, or oligarchy.

That the election of senators should be of any charge to the candidates, is an absurdity; but that it should be so to a ministry, is a manifest acknowledgment of the worst designs. If a ministry intended the service of their prince and country, or well understood wherein their own security best consisted, (as it is impossible that a parliament freely elected, according to the original institution, can do any hurt to a tolerable prince or tolerable ministry) they would use the strongest methods to leave the people to their own free choice: the members would then consist of persons, who had the best estates in the neighbourhood or country, or at least, never of strangers. And surely this is at least full as requisite a circumstance to a legislator, as to a juryman, who ought to be, if possible, *ex vicinio*; since such persons must be supposed the best judges of the wants and desires, of their several boroughs and counties. To choose a representative for Berwick, whose estate is at Land's End, would have been thought in former times a very great solecism. How

Digitized by Google

much more as it is at present, where so many persons are returned for boroughs, who do not possess a foot of land in the kingdom?

By the old constitution, whoever possessed a freehold in land, by which he was a gainer of forty shillings a year, had the privilege to vote for a knight of the shire. The good effects of this law are wholly eluded, partly by the course of time, and partly by corruption. Forty shillings, in those ages, were equal to twenty pounds in ours; and therefore it was then a want of sagacity, to fix that privilege to a determinate sum, rather than to a certain quantity of land, arable or pasture, able to produce a certain quantity of corn or hay. And therefore it is highly absurd, and against the intent of the law, that this defect is not regulated.

But the matter is still worse; for any gentleman can, upon occasion, make as many freeholders, as his estate or settlement will allow, by making leases for life of land at a rack rent of forty shillings; where a tenant, who is not worth one farthing a year when his rent is paid, shall be held a legal voter for a person to represent his county. Neither do I enter into half the frauds that are practised upon this occasion.

It is likewise absurd, that boroughs decayed are not absolutely extinguished, because the returned members do in reality represent nobody at all; and that several large towns are not represented, though full of industrious townsmen, who must advance the trade of the kingdom.

The claim of senators, to have themselves and servants exempted from lawsuits and arrests, is manifestly absurd. The proceedings at law are already

so

Digitized by Google

so scandalous a grievance, upon account of the delays, that they little need any addition. Whoever is either not able, or not willing, to pay his just debts, or, to keep other men out of their lands, would evade the decision of the law, is surely but ill qualified to be a legislator. A criminal with as good reason might sit on the bench, with a power of condemning men to be hanged for their honesty. By the annual sitting of parliaments, and the days of privilege preceding and subsequent, a senator is one half of the year beyond the reach of common justice.

That the sacred person of a senator's footman, shall be free from arrest, although he undoes the poor ale-wife by running on score, is a circumstance of equal wisdom and justice, to avoid the great evil of his master's lady wanting her complement of liveries behind the coach.

Digitized by Google

SHORT

REMARKS

ON

BISHOP BURNET'S HISTORY.

THIS author is in most particulars the worst qualified for an historian that ever I met with. His style is rough, full of improprieties, in expressions often Scotch, and often such as are used by the meanest people *. He discovers a great scarcity of words and phrases, by repeating the same several hundred times, for want of capacity to vary them. His observations are mean

* His own opinion, however, was very different, as appears by the original MS. of his History, wherein the following lines are legible, though among those which were ordered not to be printed: "And if I have arrived at any faculty of writing clear "and correctly, I owe that entirely to them [Tillotson and "Lloyd]; for as they joined with Wilkins in that noble though "despised attempt, of an Universal Character, and a Philoso-"phical Language, they took great pains to observe all the "common errours of language in general, and of ours in parti-"cular. And in drawing the tables for that work, which was "Lloyd's province, he looked farther into a natural purity "and simplicity of style, than any man I ever knew. Into all "which he led me, and so helped me to any measure of exact-"ness of writing, which may be thought to belong to me." The above was originally designed to have followed the words "I knew from them," vol. i, p. 191, l. 7, fol. ed. near the end of A. D. 1661.

and

Digitized by Google

and trite, and very often false. His Secret History is generally made up of coffeehouse scandals, or at best from reports at the third, fourth, or fifth hand. The account of the pretender's birth, would only become an old woman in a chimney-corner. His vanity runs intolerably through the whole book, affecting to have been of consequence at nineteen years old, and while he was a little Scotch parson of 40 pounds a year. He was a gentleman born, and in the time of his youth and vigour, drew in an old maiden daughter of a Scotch earl to marry him. His characters are miserably wrought, in many things mistaken, and all of them detracting *, except of those who were friends to the presbyterians. That early love of liberty he boasts of, is absolutely false; for the first book that I believe he ever published, is an entire treatise in favour of passive obedience and absolute power; so that his reflections on the clergy, for asserting, and then changing those principles, come very improperly from him. He is the most partial of all writers that ever pretended so much to impartiality; and yet I, who knew him well, am convinced that he is as impartial as he could possibly find in his heart; I am

* Many of which were stricken through with his own hand, but left legible in the MS.; which he ordered in his last will, "his executor to print faithfully, as he left it, without adding, "suppressing, or altering it in any particular." In the second volume, judge Burnet, the bishop's son and executor, promises that "the original manuscript of both volumes shall be deposited "in the Cotton Library." But this promise does not appear to have been fulfilled; at least it certainly was not in 1736, when Two Letters were printed, addressed to Thomas Burnet, esq. In p. 8 of the second letter, the writer asserted, that he had in his own possession "an authentick and complete collection of "the castrated passages."

Digitized by Google

sure more than I ever expected from him; particularly in his accounts of the papist and fanatick plots. This work may be more properly called A History of Scotland during the author's time, with some digressions relating to England, rather than deserve the title he gives it. For I believe two thirds of it relate only to that beggarly nation, and their insignificant brangles and factions. What he succeeds best in is in giving extracts of arguments and debates in council or parliament. Nothing recommends his book but the recency of the facts he mentions, most of them being still in memory, especially the story of the Revolution; which, however, is not so well told as might be expected from one who affects to have had so considerable a share in it. After all, he was a man of generosity and good nature, and very communicative; but, in his ten last years, was absolutely party-mad, and fancied he saw popery under every bush. He has told me many passages not mentioned in this history, and many that are, but with several circumstances suppressed or altered. He never gives a good character without one essential point, that the person was tender to dissenters, and thought many things in the church ought to be amended.

Setting up for a maxim, Laying down for a maxim, Clapt up, and some other words and phrases, he uses many hundred times.

Cut out for a Court, a pardoning planet, Clapt up, Left in the lurch, The Mob, Outed, A great beauty, Went roundly to work: All these phrases used by the vulgar, show him to have kept mean or illiterate company in his youth.

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS

OF

CAPTAIN JOHN CREICHTON.

FROM HIS OWN MATERIALS.

DRAWN UP AND DIGESTED BY

DR. J. SWIFT, D. S. P. D.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1731.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE PRINTER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN Dr. Swift was at sir Arthur Acheson's, at Markethill, in the county of Armagh, an old gentleman was recommended to him, as being a remarkable cavalier in the reigns of Charles II, James II, and William III; who had behaved with great loyalty and bravery in Scotland during the troubles of those reigns, but was neglected by the government, although he deserved great rewards from it. As he was reduced in his circumstances, Dr. Swift made him a handsome present; but said at the same time, "Sir, this trifle cannot support you long, and your "friends may grow tired of you; therefore I would "have you contrive some honest means of getting a "sum of money, sufficient to put you into a way of "life of supporting yourself with independency in "your old age." To which captain Creichton (for that was the gentleman's name) answered, "I have "tired all my friends, and cannot expect any such "extraordinary favours." Then Dr. Swift replied, "Sir, I have heard much of your adventures; that "they are fresh in your memory; that you can "tell them with great humour; and that you have "taken memorandums of them in writing." To which the captain said, "I have; but no one can "understand them but myself." Then Dr. Swift rejoined, "Sir, get your manuscripts, read them to "me, and tell me none but genuine stories; and "then

Digitized by Google

" then I will place them in order for you, prepare " them for the press, and endeavour to get you a " subscription among my friends, as you may do " among your own." The captain soon after waited on the dean with his papers, and related many adventures to him; which the dean was so kind as to put in order of time, to correct the style, and make a small book of, entitled, THE MEMOIRS OF CAPTAIN JOHN CREICHTON. A subscription was immediately set on foot, by the dean's interest and recommendation, which raised for the captain above two hundred pounds, and made the remaining part of his life very happy and easy.

Digitized by Google

TO THE READER.

THE author of these Memoirs, captain John Creichton, is still alive, and resides in the northern part of this kingdom. He is a very honest and worthy man, but of the old stamp; and it is probable that some of his principles will not relish very well in the present disposition of the world. His memoirs are therefore to be received like a posthumous work, and as containing facts, which very few alive, except himself, can remember: upon which account, none of his generous subscribers are, in the least, answerable for many opinions, relating to the publick, both in church and state, which he seems to justify; and in the vindication of which, to the hazard of his life, and the loss of his fortune, he spent the most useful part of his days. Principles, as the world goes, are little more than fashion; and the apostle tells us, that "the fashion of this world passeth away." We read with pleasure the memoirs of several authors, whose party we disapprove, if they be written with nature and truth. Curious men are desirous to see what can be said on both sides; and even the virulent flat relation of Ludlow, though written in the spirit of rage, prejudice, and vanity, does not want its advocates. This inclines me to think, that the memoirs of captain Creichton may not be unacceptable to the curious of every party; because, from my knowledge of the man, and the testimony of several considerable persons,

Digitized by Google

sons, of different political denominations, I am confident, that he has not inserted one passage or circumstance, which he did not know, or, from the best intelligence he could get, believe to be true.

These Memoirs are therefore offered to the world in their native simplicity. And it was not with little difficulty, that the author was persuaded by his friends to recollect and put them in order, chiefly for his own justification, and partly by the importunity of several eminent gentlemen, who had a mind that they should turn to some profit to the author.

The captain, having made over all his little estate to a beloved daughter, upon her marriage, on the condition of being entertained in her house for the small remainder of his life, has put it out of his own power, either to supply his incidental wants, to pay some long contracted debts, or to gratify his generous nature in being farther useful to his family: on which accounts, he desires to return his most humble thanks to his worthy subscribers; and hopes they will consider him no farther than as an honest, well meaning man, who, by his own personal courage and conduct, was able to distinguish himself, under many disadvantages, to a degree, that few private lives have been attended with so many singular and extraordinary events.

Beside the great simplicity in the style and manner of the author, it is a very valuable circumstance, that his plain relation corrects many mistaken passages in other historians, which have too long passed for truths; and whoever impartially compares both, will probably decide in the captain's favour: for, the memory of old men is seldom deceived, in what passed in their youth and vigour of age: and if he has,

Digitized by Google

has, at any time, happened to be mistaken in circumstances of time or place (with neither of which I can charge him) it was certainly against his will. Some of his own personal distresses and actions, which he has related, might be almost the subject of a tragedy.

Upon the whole, comparing great things to small, I know not any memoirs that more resemble those of Philip de Comines (which have received so universal approbation) than these of captain Creichton; which are told in a manner equally natural, and with equal appearance of truth, although, I confess, upon affairs in a more obscure scene, and of less importance.

J. S.

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS*

OF

CAPTAIN JOHN CREICHTON.

THE former part of my life having been attended with some passages and events, not very common to men of my private and obscure condition, I have (perhaps induced by the talkativeness of old age) very freely and frequently communicated them to several worthy gentlemen, who were pleased to be my friends, and some of them my benefactors. These persons professed themselves to be so well entertained with my story, that they often wished it could be digested into order, and published to the world; believing that such a treatise, by the variety of incidents, written in a plain unaffected style, might be, at least, some amusement to indifferent readers; of some example to those who desire strictly to adhere to their duty and principles; and might serve to vindicate my reputation in Scotland, where I am well known; that kingdom having been the chief scene of my acting, and where I have been represented, by a fanatick rebellious party, as a persecutor of the saints, and a man of blood.

* These memoirs contain a most striking picture of the spirit and calamities of those times: such a one as is not to be found in more general histories, where private distress is absorbed in the fate of nations.

Having

Digitized by Google

Having lost the benefit of a thorough school education, by a most indiscreet marriage in all worldly views, although to a very good woman; and in consequence thereof, being forced to seek my fortune in Scotland as a soldier, where I forgot all the little I had learned, the reader cannot reasonably expect to be much pleased with my style, or methods or manner of relating; it is enough, if I never wilfully fail in point of truth, nor offend by malice or partiality. My memory, I thank God, is yet very perfect as to things long past; although, like an old man, I retain but little of what has happened since I grew into years.

I am likewise very sensible of an infirmity in many authors, who write their own memoirs, and are apt to lay too much weight upon trifles: which they are vain enough to conceive the world to be as much concerned in as themselves; yet I remember that Plutarch, in his lives of great men (which I have read in the English translation) says, that the nature and disposition of a man's mind may be often better discovered by a small circumstance, than by an action or event of the greatest importance. And besides, it is not improbable that gray hairs may have brought upon me a vanity, to desire that posterity may know what manner of man I was.

I lie under another disadvantage, and indeed a very great one, from the wonderful change of opinions, since I first made any appearance in the world. I was bred under the principles of the strictest loyalty to my prince, and in an exact conformity in discipline, as well as doctrine, to the church of England; which are neither altered nor shaken to this very day; and I am now too old to mend. However, my different

Digitized by Google

different sentiments, since my last troubles after the Revolution, have never had the least influence either upon my actions or discourse. I have submitted myself with entire resignation, according to St. Paul's precept, "to the powers that be." I converse equally with all parties, and am equally favoured by all; and God knows, it is now of little consequence what my opinions are, under such a weight of age and infirmities, with a very scanty subsistence, which, instead of comforting, will hardly support me.

But there is another point, which requires a better apology than I am able to give: a judicious reader will be apt to censure me (and I confess with reason enough) as guilty of a very foolish superstition in relating my dreams, and how I was guided by them with success, in discovering one or two principal covenanters. I shall not easily allow myself to be, either by nature or education, more superstitious than other men: but I take the truth to be this: being then full of zeal against enthusiastical rebels, and better informed of their lurking holes than most officers in the army, this made so strong an impression on my mind, that it affected my dreams, when I was directed to the most probable places, almost as well as if I had been awake, being guided in the night by the same conjectures I had made in the day. There could possibly be no more in the matter; and God forbid I should pretend to a spirit of divination, which would make me resemble those very hypocritical saints, whom it was both my duty and inclination to bring to justice, for their many horrid blasphemies against God, rebellions against their prince, and barbarities toward their countrymen and fellow Christians.

My

Digitized by Google

My great-grandfather, Alexander Creichton, of the house of Dumfries, in Scotland, in a feud between the Maxwells and the Johnstons (the chief of the Johnstons being the lord Johnston, ancestor of the present marquis of Annandale) siding with the latter, and having killed some of the former, was forced to fly into Ireland, where he settled near Kinard, then a woody country, and now called Calidon: but within a year or two, some friends and relations of those Maxwells who had been killed in the feud, coming over to Ireland to pursue their revenge, lay in wait for my great-grandfather in the wood, and shot him dead, as he was going to church. This accident happened about the time that James the Sixth of Scotland came to the crown of England.

Alexander, my great-grandfather, left two sons, and as many daughters; his eldest son John lived till a year or two after the rebellion in 1641. His house was the first in Ulster set upon by the Irish, who took and imprisoned him at Dungannon; bnt fortunately making his escape, he went to sir Robert Stuart, who was then in arms for the king, and died in the service.

This John, who was my grandfather, left two sons, Alexander, my father, and a younger son, likewise named John; who being a child, but two or three years old at his father's death, was invited to Scotland by the lady Dumfries, there educated by her, and sent to sea: he made several voyages to and from Barbadoes, then settled in Scotland, where he died some time after the Restoration, leaving, beside a daughter, one son; who, at my charges, was bred up a physician, and proved so famous in his profession, that he was sent by her late majesty queen Anne

Digitized by Google

to cure the king of Portugal of the venereal disease. He had a thousand pounds paid him in hand, before he began his journey; but when he arrived at Lisbon, the Portuguese council and physicians dissuaded that king from trusting his person with a foreigner. However his majesty of Portugal showed him several marks of his esteem, and, at parting, presented him with a very rich jewel, which he sold afterward for five hundred guineas. He staid there not above six weeks; during which time, he got considerable practice. After living many years in London, where he grew very rich, he died November 1726, and, as it is believed, without making a will; which is very probable, because, although he had no children, he left me no legacy, who was his cousin-german, and had been his greatest benefactor by the care and expense of his education. Upon this matter, I must add one circumstance more, how little significant soever it may be to others. Mr. archdeacon Maurice being at London, in order to his journey to France on account of his health, went to visit the doctor, and put him in mind of me, urging the obligations I had laid upon him. The doctor agreed to send me whatever sum of money the archdeacon should think reasonable, and deliver it to him on his return from his travels; but unfortunately the doctor died two or three days before the archdeacon came back.

Alexander, my father, was about eighteen years old in 1641. The Irish rebellion then breaking out, he went to captain Gerard Irvin, his relation, who was then captain of horse, and afterward knighted by king Charles the Second. This gentleman, having a party for the king, soon after joined with sir Robert Stuart in the county of Donegal; where, in the course of those

Digitized by Google

those troubles, they continued skirmishing, sometimes with the Irish rebels, and sometimes with those of the English parliament, after the rebellion in England began; till at length captain Irvin and one Mr. Stuart were taken prisoners, and put in gaol in Derry; which city was kept for the parliament against the king, by sir Charles Coote. Here my father performed a very memorable and gallant action, in rescuing his relation captain Irvin, and Mr. Stuart. I will relate this fact in all its particulars, not only because it will do some honour to my father's memory, but likewise because, for its boldness and success, it seems to me very well to deserve recording.

My father having received information, that sir Charles Coote, governor of Derry, had publickly declared, that captain Irvin and his companions should be put to death, within two or three days, communicated this intelligence to seven trusty friends; who all engaged to assist him, with the hazard of their lives, in delivering the two gentlemen from the danger that threatened them. They all agreed that my father, and three more, at the hour of six in the morning, when the west gate stood open, and the drawbridge was let down for the governor's horses to go out to water, should ride in, one by one, after a manner as if they belonged to the town, and there conceal themselves in a friend's house till night; at which time my father was to acquaint captain Irvin and his fellow-prisoner with their design, which was to this purpose: That, after concerting measures at the prison, my father should repair to a certain place on the city wall, and give instructions to the four without, at twelve at night: accordingly, next morning, as soon as the gate was open, my father, with his three comrades,

Digitized by Google

got into the town, and the same night having settled matters with the two gentlemen, that they should be ready at six next morning, at which hour he and his three friends should call upon them; he then went to the wall, and directed the four, who were without, that as soon as they should see the gate open, and the bridge drawn, one of them should walk up to the sentry, and secure him from making any noise, by holding a pistol to his breast; after which, the other three should ride up, and secure the room where the by-guard lay, to prevent them from coming out: most of the garrison were in their beds, which encouraged my father and his friends, and much facilitated the enterprise: therefore, precisely at six o'clock, when the by-guard and sentry at the western gate were secured by the four without, my father and the other three within being mounted on horseback, with one spare horse, in the habit of town's people, with cudgels in their hands, called at the gaol door, on pretence to speak to captain Irvin, and Mr. Stuart. They were both walking in a large room in the gaol, with the gaoler, and three soldiers attending them; but these not suspecting the persons on horseback before the door, whom they took to be inhabitants of the town, my father asked captain Irvin, whether he had any commands to a certain place, where he pretended to be going; the captain made some answer, but said they should not go before they had drank with him; then giving a piece of money to one of the soldiers, to buy a bottle of sack at a tavern a good way off, and pretending likewise some errand for another soldier, sent him also out of the way. There being now none left to guard the prisoners but the gaoler, and the third soldier; captain Irvin leaped over

Digitized by Google

over the hatch door, and as the gaoler leaped after, my father knocked him down with his cudgel. While this was doing, Mr. Stuart tripped up the soldier's heels, and immediately leaped over the hatch. They both mounted, Stuart on the horse behind my father, and Irvin on the spare one, and in a few minutes came up with their companions at the gate, before the main guard could arrive, although it were kept within twenty yards of the gaol door.

I should have observed, that as soon as captain Irvin and his friend got over the hatch, my father and his comrades put a couple of broad swords into their hands, which they had concealed under their cloaks, and at the same time drawing their own, were all six determined to force their way against any who offered to obstruct them in their passage; but the dispatch was so sudden, that they got clear out of the gate, before the least opposition could be made. They were no sooner gone, than the town was alarmed, Coote, the governor, got out of his bed, and ran into the streets in his shirt, to know what the hubbub meant, and was in a great rage at the accident. The adventurers met the governor's groom, coming back with his master's horses from watering; they seized the horses, and got safe to sir Robert Stuart's, about four miles off, without losing one drop of blood in this hazardous enterprise.

This gallant person (if I may so presume to call my father) had above twenty children by his wife Anne Maxwell, of the family of the earl of Nithsdale, of whom I was the eldest; they all died young, except myself, three other boys, and two girls; who lived to be men and women. My second brother I took care to have educated at Glasgow, but he was drowned

Digitized by Google

at two and twenty years old, in a storm, on his return to Ireland. The other two died captains abroad, in the service of king William.

I was born on the eighth day of May, 1648, at Castle-Fin in the county of Donegal. I made some small progress in learning at the school of Dungannon; but when I was eighteen years old, I very inconsiderately married Mrs. Elizabeth Delgarno, my schoolmaster's daughter, by whom I have had thirteen children, who all died young, except two daughters, married to two brothers James and Charles Young, of the county of Tyrone.

Having been so very young when I married, I could think of no other course to advance my fortune, than by getting into the army. Captain Irvin, often mentioned already, had a brother who was a physician at Edinburgh, to whom he wrote in my favour, desiring he would recommend me to the marquis of Atholl and others, then at the head of affairs in Scotland; this was in the year 1674. There were then but one troop of horse-guards (whereof the marquis was colonel) and one regiment of foot-guards, commanded by the earl of Linlithgow, in that kingdom; and they consisted chiefly of gentlemen.

Dr. Irvin, physician to the horse-guards, accordingly presented me to the marquis of Atholl, requesting that I might be received into his troop. His lordship pretending there was no vacancy, was, by the doctor threatened, in a free jesting manner, with a dose of poison, instead of physick, the first time he should want his skill; "Weell, weell then," quoth the marquis, "what is your friend's name?" "Deel tak' "me," answered the doctor, "gin I ken;" whereupon I was called in, to write my name in the roll.

I was

Digitized by Google

I was then ordered to repair to the troop at Stirling, with directions to lieutenant colonel Cockburn, the commanding officer, to put me into which of the four squadrons, whereof the troop consisted, he thought fit. He thereupon placed me in his own, and appointed me my quarters.

Soon after this, the conventicles growing numerous in the west, several parties were drawn out to suppress them; among whom I never failed to make one, in hopes thereby to be taken notice of by my commanders: for I had nothing to recommend me, except my activity, diligence, and courage, being a stranger, and born out of that kingdom.

My first action, after having been taken into the guards, was, with a dozen gentlemen more, to go in quest of mas David Williamson, a noted covenanter; since, made more famous in the book, called the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence. I had been assured that this Williamson did much frequent the house of my lady Cherrytree, within ten miles of Edinburgh; but when I arrived first with my party about the house, the lady, well knowing our errand, put Williamson to bed to her daughter, disguised in a woman's night-dress. When the troopers went to search in the young lady's room, her mother pretended that she was not well; and Williamson so managed the matter that when the daughter raised herself a little in the bed, to let the troopers see her, they did not discover him, and so went off disappointed. But the young lady proved with child; and Williamson, to take off the scandal, married her in some time after. This Williamson married five or six wives successively, and was alive in the reign of queen Anne; at which time, I saw him, preaching in one of the kirks at Edin-

Digitized by Google

burgh. It is said that king Charles the Second, hearing of Williamson's behaviour in lady Cherrytree's house, wished to see the man that discovered so much vigour while his troopers were in search of him: and in a merry way, declared, that when he was in the royal oak, he could not have kissed the bonniest lass in Christendom.

Some time after this, Thomas Dalziel, general of the forces in Scotland, an excellent soldier, who had been taken prisoner at the famous battle of Worcester, and sent prisoner to the tower, escaping from thence into Muscovy, was made general to the czar: and returning home, after the Restoration, was preferred, by the king, to be general of the forces in Scotland; in which post he continued till his death, which happened a little before the Revolution. This general commanded fifty of the foot-guards, with an ensign, to accompany me, and to follow my directions, in the pursuit of a notorious rebel, one Adam Stobow, a farmer in Fife, near Culross. This fellow had gone through the west, endeavouring to stir up sedition in the people, by his great skill in canting and praying. There had been several parties sent out after him, before I and my men undertook the business; but they could never discover him. We reached Culross at night, where I directed the ensign and all the men to secure three or four rebels, who were in the place, while I, with two or three of the soldiers to assist me, went to Stobow's house, about a mile and a half from Culross, by break of day, for fear some of his friends might give him notice. Before I got to the house, I observed a kiln in the way, which I ordered to be searched, because I found there a heap of straw in the passage, up to the kiln pot. There I found Stobow lurking

Digitized by Google

lurking, and carried him to Culross, although his daughter offered me a hundred dollars to let him go. We returned immediately to the general at Edinburgh, with Stobow and the prisoners taken by the ensign at Culross. They continued a while in confinement, but Stobow, at his trial, found friends enough to save his life, and was only banished; yet he returned home a year after, and proved as troublesome and seditious as ever, till, at the fight at Bothwell bridge, it was thought he was killed, for he was never heard of afterward.

During the time I was in the guards, about two years after the affair of mas David Williamson, at the lady Cherrytree's, I was quartered with a party at Bathgate, which is a small village, twelve miles from Edinburgh. One Sunday morning, by break of day, I and my comrade, a gallant highland gentleman, of the name of Grant, went out disguised in gray coats and bonnets, in search after some conventicle. We travelled on foot, eight or ten miles into the wild mountains, where we spied three fellows on the top of a hill, whom we conjectured to stand their as spies, to give intelligence to a conventicle, when any of the king's troopers should happen to come that way. There they stood, with long poles in there hands, till I and my friend came pretty near, and then they turned to go down the hill: when we observed this, we took a little compass, and came up with them on the other side; whereupon they stood still, leaning on their poles. Then I bounced forward upon one of them, and suddenly snatched the pole out of his hand, asked him why he carried such a pole on the Lord's day, and at the same time knocked him down with it. My comrade immediately seized on the second, and laid

Digitized by Google

laid him flat by a gripe of his hair; but the third took to his heels, and ran down the hill. However, having left my friend to guard the two former, I overtook the last, and felled him likewise: but the place being steep, the violence with which I ran carried me a good way down the hill, before I could recover myself after the stroke I had given; and by the time I could get up again to the place where he lay, the rogue had got on his feet, and was fumbling for a side pistol, that hung at his belt, under his upper coat; which as soon as I observed, I fetched him to the ground a second time with the pole, and seized on his pistol; then leading him up to the other two, I desired my friend to examine their pockets, and see whether they carried any powder or ball; but we found none.

We then led our prisoners down the hill, at the foot of which there was a bog, and on the other side a man sitting on a rock; when we advanced near him, leaving our prisoners in the keeping of my friend, I ran up toward the man, who fled down on the other side, As soon as I had reached the top of the rock, there appeared a great number of people assembled in a glen, to hear the preaching of mas John King, as I understood afterward; whose voice was so loud, that it reached the ears of those who were at the greatest distance, which could not, I think, be less than a quarter of a mile; they all standing before him, and the wind favouring the strength of his lungs. When my friend had brought the three prisoners to the top of the rock, where I waited for him, they all broke loose, and ran down to the conventicle; but my friend advancing within about forty yards of that rabble, commanded them in his majesty's name to depart to their

Digitized by Google

their own homes. Whereupon about forty of their number, with poles in their hands, drew out from the rest, and advanced against us two, who had the courage, or rather the temerity, to face so great a company, which could not be fewer than a thousand. As this party of theirs was preparing with their long poles to attack me and my friend, it happened very luckily, that a fine gelding, saddled and bridled, with a pillion likewise upon him, came up near us in search of better grass; I caught the horse, and immediately mounted him, which the rest of the conventiclers observing, they broke up, and followed as fast as they could, some on horseback, and the rest on foot, to prevent me from going off with the horse; but I put him to the gallop, and suffering him to choose his own way through the mountain, which was full of bogs and hags, got out of reach. My friend kept up with me as long as he could, but having run a mile through such difficult places, he was quite spent, and the conventiclers hard at his heels; whereupon he called to me for assistance, and I alighting put him upon the horse, bidding him to make the best of his way to the laird of Poddishaw's about two miles off. By this time we saw twelve covenanters on horseback, who advanced toward us by a shorter cut, and blocked up a gap, through which we were of necessity to pass. I undertook to clear the gap for my friend, and running toward the rogues, with my broad sword and pistol, soon forced them to open to the right and left: my comrade got through, and was pursued a good way; but he so laid about him, with his broad sword, that the pursuers, being unarmed, durst not seize him. In the mean time, I, who was left on foot, kept the covenanters, who followed me, at a proper

Digitized by Google

proper distance; but they pelted me with clods, which I sometimes returned, till at last, after chasing me above a mile, they saw a party of troopers in red, passing by, at some distance; and then they gave over their pursuit.

The troopers observing my friend galloping and pursued, imagined he was some fanatick preacher, till they came to an old woman on a hill, whom my friend had desired to deny his being gone that way; upon which they went off to their quarters, and he got safe to Poddishaw's, whither I soon after arrived. The laird of Poddishaw had been that day at church; from whence, returning with the laird of Pocammock, who lived about a mile off, they both wondered how the horse got thither: for Pocammock was the owner of the horse, and his lady had rode on it that day to the conventicle, without her husband's knowledge, having been seduced thither by some fanatick neighbours, for she had never been at their meetings before. My friend and I acquainted the two lairds of the whole adventure of that day: and after dinner, Pocammock requested to let him have the horse home, thereby to stifle any reflection his lady might bring upon him, or herself, by going to a conventicle; he likewise invited us to dine next day at his house, where the horse should again be delivered to me, as justly forfeited by the folly of his wife. We went accordingly with the laird of Poddishaw, and dined at Pocammock's: where the horse was ordered to be led out into the court, in the same accoutrements as I found him the day before: but observing the lady in tears, I told her, that if she would give me her promise never to go to a conventicle again, I would bestow her the horse, and conceal what had passed; she readily

Digitized by Google

readily complied, and so the matter was made up. However, the laird her husband assured me that no horse in Scotland should be better paid for; and being a leading man in the country, and his lady discovering the names of those who had been at the conventicle, he sent for them, and persuaded them, as they valued their quiet, to make up a purse for me and my friend, which they accordingly did; and we both lived plentifully a twelvemonth after, on the price of that horse.

This adventure, making much noise at Edinburgh, was the occasion of my being sent for up thither by the marquis of Atholl my colonel, who in a very friendly manner expostulated with me upon my rashness; as indeed he had too much reason to do; neither was I able to say any thing in my own justification. However, since what I had done discovered my loyalty for my prince, my zeal for the church, and my detestation of all rebellious principles; his lordship ever after gave me many marks of his friendship.

Accordingly, these services gave me so much credit with the general, that he promised to apply to the government, in my favour, for some preferment in the army, upon the first opportunity, which happened about a year afterward. For the seditious humours in the west still increasing, it was thought proper, that three independent troops of horse, and as many of dragoons, should be raised to suppress the rebels. Whereupon Mr. Francis Stuart, grandson to the earl of Bothwell, a private gentleman in the horse-guards like myself, and my intimate acquaintance, was sent for, in haste, by the general; because the council of Scotland was then writing to the king, that his majesty

Digitized by Google

jesty would please to grant commissions to those persons whose names were to be sent up to London, that very night. Mr. Stuart gave me notice of this: whereupon, although I was not sent for, I resolved to go up with him to Edinburgh, and solicit for myself. When I arrived there, and attended the general, his first question was in a humourous manner, "Wha the deel sent for you up?" I answered, that I hoped his excellency would now make good his promise, of preferring me, since so fair an opportunity offered at present. On this occasion the general stood my firm friend; and although the sons and brothers of lords and baronets, and other persons of quality solicited to be made lieutenants and cornets in these new raised troops, yet the general, in regard to my services, prevailed with the council, that I might be appointed lieutenant to Mr. Stuart, who was then made captain of dragoons.

Soon after this, the archbishop of St. Andrew's was murdered by the laird of Hackston and Balfour, assisted by four poor weavers *. Hackston, before this horrid action, was reputed an honest and gallant man; but his friendship for his brother-in-law Balfour drew him in to commit this inhuman murder. Balfour, who had been the archbishop's chamberlain (for so in Scotland we call a great man's steward) whether by negligence or dishonesty, was short in his payments to his lord; and the fear of being called to an

* "One of them fired a pistol at him, which burnt his coat "and gown, but did not go into his body: upon this, they fan- "cied he had a magical secret to secure him against a shot, and "they drew him out of his coach, and murdered him barbarously, "repeating their strokes till they were sure he was quite dead." Burnet, History, vol. ii, 8vo, p. 102.

account

Digitized by Google

account was a principal motive to assassinate his master: however, he pretended likewise a great zeal for the kirk, whereof he looked upon the archbishop as the greatest oppressor. It is certain, that the lower people mortally hated the archbishop, on pretence that his grace had deserted their communion: and the weavers who were accomplices of Balfour, believed they did God service in destroying an enemy of the kirk; and accordingly all the murderers were esteemed and styled saints, by that rebellious faction.

After the murder of the archbishop, several parties in the west took up arms, under the leading of Robert Hamilton, second son to sir William Hamilton, of Preston, the unworthy son of a most worthy father: whereupon the council met, and sent for Graham, then laird of Clavers, afterward created viscount Dundee by king James the Seventh. This noble person was, at that time, captain of one of those independent troops of horse, which, as I have already mentioned, were raised before the murder of the archbishop. The council therefore ordered him to march with a detachment of one hundred and twenty dragoons, and a lieutenant, with his own troop, in pursuit of the rebels. Clavers was obliged not to open his commission, until he came in sight of them. In his march he took mas John King, one of their principal preachers. Clavers carried King along, until he came in sight of the enemy, at Drumclog, eight miles from Hamilton. There the preacher was guarded by a dragoon sentry, at a little cabin, on the top of the hill, while Clavers opening his commission, found himself commanded to fight the rebels, let their number be ever so great, with those hundred and twenty dragoons.

But

Digitized by Google

But before I proceed to tell the issue of this affair, I must digress a little upon the subject of mas John King, above-mentioned. When I was in the guards, some time after I had missed Williamson at lady Cherrytree's house; the government hearing that this John King was beginning to hold his conventicles not far from Stirling, where the troop of horse then lay, ordered the commanding officer there to send a party out to take him, and bring him up to the council. I was pitched upon, with a small detachment, to perform this service. I went to my lord Cadrosse's house, to whose lady King was chaplain; there I took him and delivered him to the council. This preacher had gotten the lady's woman with child, about four or five months before, and it is supposed, had promised her marriage, provided the lady would stand his friend in his present distress; whereupon she was so far his friend, as to get him bailed, on her engaging, he should hold no more conventicles: however, he went to the hills, and there preached the people to arms; and in several towns, as Kirkcudbright, Lanerk, and Sanquehar in particular, in company with Cameron, set up declarations on the market crosses against the king, whom he excommunicated, with all his adherents. Thus he continued till Clavers took him at Drumclog, as is abovementioned, where he got off again, until I took him a third time, after the battle of Bothwell bridge, which shall be related in its proper place.

The rebels at Drumclog were eight or nine thousand strong: their leader, as I have said before, was Robert Hamilton, second brother to the loyal house of Preston, but a profligate, who had spent all his patrimony. There were likewise among them the lairds

Digitized by Google

lairds of Knockgray and Fruah, with many other gentlemen of fortune, whose names I have forgot. Clavers's men, with the addition of some few that came in to him, did not exceed one hundred and eighty; yet, pursuant to his orders, he was forced to fight the enemy; but being so vastly outnumbered, was soon defeated, with the loss of cornet Robert Graham, and about eight or ten private troopers. The rebels finding the cornet's body, and supposing it to be that of Clavers, because the name of Graham was wrought in the shirt neck, treated it with the utmost inhumanity, cutting off the nose, picking out the eyes, and stabbing it through in a hundred places.

Clavers, in his flight toward Hamilton and Glasgow, rode a horse that trailed his guts for two miles, from the place where the engagement happened; but overtaking his groom with some led horses, he mounted one of them, and with the remains of his small army escaped to Glasgow. The rebels, pursuing as far as Hamilton, advanced that evening within a mile of Glasgow, where they encamped all night. As Clavers was marching after his men up the hill, where he had left mas John King under the guard of a dragoon (who ran off with the first that fled) King, in a sneering way, desired him to stay, and take his prisoner with him.

The rebels being thus encamped within a mile of Glasgow, Clavers commanded his men in the town to stand to their arms all night; and having barricadoed the four streets, to prevent the rebels horse from breaking in, ordered me, at sun rise, to march with six dragoons, and discover which way the rebels intended to come into the town. I must here observe, that I, with captain Stuart's troop of dragoons,

Digitized by Google

and a battalion of the foot-guards, remained at Glasgow, while Clavers marched to Drumclog, where he was defeated. But to return; I followed the directions which were given me, and having discovered the enemy from a little eminence, I was ordered by Clavers, who came to me there, to watch at a small house, where the way divided, and see which of the roads they would take, or whether they separated, and each party took a different way. I stayed until I saw them take two different roads; some by that from whence I came from the town, which was over the Gallowgate bridge, and the rest by the high church and college, which was more than twice as far as the first party had to come, and consequently could not both meet at the same time within the town. This was a great advantage to Clavers, and his little army. That party of the rebels which took Gallowgate bridge road, followed me close to the heels, as I returned to inform Clavers what course they took.

The broad street was immediately full of them, but advancing toward the barricade, before their fellows, who followed the other road, could arrive to their assistance, were valiantly received by Clavers and his men, who firing on them at once, and jumping over the carts and cars that composed the barricade, chased them out of the town; but were quickly forced to return, and receive the other party; which, by that time, was marching down by the high church and college; but when they came within pistol shot, were likewise fired upon, and driven out of the town. In this action many of the rebels fell, but the king's party lost not so much as one man.

The townsmen being too well affected to the rebels, concealed many of them in their houses; the rest

Digitized by Google

rest who escaped, met and drew up in a field behind the high church, where they stayed until five in the afternoon, it being in the month of May, and from thence marched in a body to the same place where they were in the morning, about a mile off the town. Clavers and his men, expecting they would make a second attack, and discovering by his spies whither they were gone, marched after them; but, upon sight of our forces, the rebels retired with a strong rear guard of horse to Hamilton; whereupon Clavers returned, and quartered that night in Glasgow.

Next morning, the government sent orders to Clavers to leave Glasgow, and march to Stirling, eighteen miles farther; and three days after, he was commanded to bring up his party to Edinburgh. As soon as he quitted Glasgow, the rebels returned, and having stayed in that town eight or ten days, encamped on Hamilton moor, within a mile of Bothwell bridge, where it was said that their numbers were increased to fourteen thousand*; although bishop Burnet, in his History of his Own Times, most falsely and partially affirms, that they were not more than four thousand, or thereabout.

The council, finding the rebels daily increasing in their numbers, gave information thereof to the king; whereupon his majesty sent down the duke of Monmouth, with a commission, to be commander in chief, and to take with him four troops of English dragoons, which were quartered on the borders: but

* The numbers were represented to the king, by the privy council of Scotland, to have been between *six and seven* thousand. The duke of Buccleugh has a curious delineation of the action at Bothwell bridge; whence the numbers appear to be exaggerated even by the privy council.

Digitized by Google

these, with the forces in Scotland, amounted not to above three thousand. Upon the duke's being made commander in chief, general Dalziel refused to serve under him, and remained at his lodgings in Edinburgh, till his grace was superseded, which happened about a fortnight after.

The army was about four miles forward, on the road toward Hamilton, when the duke of Monmouth came up with his English dragoons, on Saturday the 21st of June: from thence the whole forces marched to the kirk of Shots, within four miles of the rebels, where they lay that night. The next morning he marched the army up an eminence, opposite to the main body of the enemy, who were encamped on the moor.

The general officers, the earl of Linlithgow, colonel of the foot-guards, the earl of Mar, colonel of a regiment of foot, Clavers, the earl of Hume, and the earl of Airley, all captains of horse, the marquis of Montrose, colonel of the horse-guards (Atholl having been discarded) Dalhousie, with many other noblemen, and gentlemen volunteers, attending the duke together, desired his grace to let them know which way he designed to take to come at the enemy; the duke answered, it must be by Bothwell bridge. Now the bridge lay a short mile to the right of the king's army, was narrow, and guarded with three thousand of the rebels, and strongly barricadoed with great stones; but, although the officers were desirous to have passed the river, by easy fords, directly between them and the rebels, and to march to their main body on the moor, before those three thousand, who guarded the bridge, could come to assist them; yet the duke was obstinate, and would pass no other way than that of the bridge.

Pursuant

Digitized by Google

Pursuant to this preposterous and absurd resolution, he commanded captain Stuart (whose lieutenant I was) with his troop of dragoons, and eighty musqueteers, together with four small fieldpieces, under cover of the dragoons, to beat off the party at the bridge: the duke himself, with David Lesly and Melvill, accompanied us, and ordered the fieldpieces to be left at the village of Bothwell, within a musket-shot of the bridge: when the duke and his men came near the bridge, the rebels beat a parley, and sent over a laird accompanied with a kirk preacher. The duke asking what they came for? was answered, "That they would have the kirk established in the "same manner as it stood at the king's restoration, "and that every subject should be obliged to take the "solemn league and covenant." The duke told them, their demand could not be granted, but sent them back to tell their party, that if they would lay down their arms, and submit to the king's mercy, he would intercede for their pardon.

While this parley lasted, the fieldpieces were brought down, and planted over against the bridge, without being perceived by the rebels. The messengers returned in a short time, with this answer: "That they would not lay down their arms, until "their conditions were granted them:" whereupon the dragoons and musqueteers fired all at once upon those who guarded the bridge, and the fieldpieces played so warmly, that some hundreds of the rebels were slain: the rest flying to the main body, on the moor *.

The

* "They had neither the grace to submit, nor the sense to "run away, nor the courage to fight it out; but suffered the "duke

Digitized by Google

The duke, as soon as he had commanded to fire, retired into a hollow, from the enemies shot, some say by the persuasion of Lesly and Melvill, and continued there till the action was over. Then captain Stuart ordered the musqueteers to make way for the horse to pass the bridge, by casting the stones into the river, which had been placed there to obstruct the passage over it; but the army could not pass in less than five hours *; and then marched up in order of battle toward the enemy, who waited for them on the moor, confiding in the great superiority of their number. Clavers commanded the horse on the right, and captain Stuart the dragoons on the left. The fieldpieces were carried in the centre of the foot-guards, while the rest of the officers commanded at the head of their men; and the duke, after the enemy was beaten from the bridge, rode at the head of the army.

Upon the first fire, the rebels horse turned about, and fled upon the right and left; and although the duke ordered his men not to stir out of their ranks to pursue them, yet the army, not regarding his commands, followed the flying rebels, killing between seven and eight hundred, and taking fifteen hundred

" duke of Monmouth to make himself master of the bridge. " They were then four thousand men; but few of them were " well armed; if they had charged those that came first over the " bridge, they might have had sure advantage; but they looked " on like men who had lost both sense and courage: and, upon " the first charge, they threw down their arms and ran away. " There were between two and three hundred killed, and twelve " hundred taken prisoners." Burnet, vol. II, p. 105.

* From the minutes of the privy council of Scotland, June 22, 1679, it appears, that from the time of the army being formed, to the total discomfiture of the rebels, *three hours* only intervened.

pri-

Digitized by Google

prisoners. Sir John Bell, provost of Glasgow, as soon as he saw the rebels fly, rode into the town; from whence, in a few hours, he sent all the bread he could find, together with a hogshead of drink to each troop and company in the army, out of the cellars of such townsmen as were found to be abettors or protectors of the rebels.

The cruelty and presumption of that wicked and perverse generation will appear evident from a single instance. These rebels had set up a very large gallows in the middle of their camp, and prepared a cart full of new ropes at the foot of it, in order to hang up the king's soldiers, whom they already looked upon as vanquished and at mercy; and it happened, that the pursuers in the royal army, returning back with their prisoners, chose the place where the gallows stood, to guard them at, without offering to hang one of them, which they justly deserved, and had so much reason to expect. The pursuers were no sooner returned, and the whole action over, than general Dalziel arrived at the camp from Edinburgh, with a commission renewed to be commander in chief, which he received that very morning by an express. This commander having learned how the duke had conducted the war, told him publickly, and with great plainness, that he had betrayed the king; that he heartily wished his commission had come a day sooner, for then, said he, "these rogues should never have "troubled his majesty, or the kingdom any more."

Thus the duke was at the same time superseded *, and

* The commission to general Dalziel was delivered to him June 22, 1679, but it was not a commission superseding the duke of Monmouth, who is styled lord general by the privy council

Digitized by Google

and publickly rebuked, before all the army; yet his grace forgot his dignity so far, as to sneak among them at the town of Bothwell (where the forces encamped) until the Saturday following: then all the troops marched back to Glasgow, from whence, in two or three days, they were sent to their several quarters; after which the duke of Monmouth passed by Stirling to Fife to visit the duke of Rothes.

The same evening after the rout on the moor, the prisoners were sent with a strong guard toward Edinburgh. On Sunday morning, when the army was to march to Glasgow, I desired the general's leave to go with twelve dragoons, in search of some of the rebels, who might probably pass the Clyde, about Dunbarton, to shelter themselves in the Highlands. With these dragoons, clad in gray coats and bonnets, I made haste down the side of the river; and about midnight, after travelling twenty-four miles, I came to a church, and while the soldiers stayed to refresh their horses in the churchyard, I spied a country fellow going by, and asked him in his own dialect, "Whither gang ye "this time of night?" He answered, "Wha are ye "that speers?" I replied, "We are your ane fo'ke:" Upon this the fellow came up, and told me, there were eighteen friends, with horses, at an old castle waiting for a boat to pass over into the isle of Arran. I mounted the man behind one of the dragoons, and went toward the place: but the rebels, not finding a boat, were gone off, and the guide dismissed. There was a great dew on the grass, which directed me and my party to follow the track of their horses, for three or

council June 24, and wrote in that character to their lordships the same day. His commission, however, was revoked the first of November following.

four

Digitized by Google

four miles, till the dew was gone off; I then inquired of a cowherd on a hill, whether he saw any of our "poor fo'ke" travelling that way; he answered, that they had separated on that hill, and gone three several ways, six in a party; adding, that in one party there was "a braw, muckle kerl, with a white hat on "him, and a great bob of ribands on the cock o't." Whereupon I sent four of my dragoons after one party, four more after another; and myself, with the remaining four, went in pursuit of him with the white hat. As I went forward, I met another cowherd, who told me that the fellow with the hat, and one more (for as the rogues advanced farther into the west, they still divided into smaller parties) were just gone down the hill, to his master's house. The good man of the house returning from putting the horses to grass in the garden, was going to shut the door: whereupon myself and two of the dragoons commanded him, with our pistols at his breast, to lead us to the room where the man lay who wore a white hat. We entered the room, and before he awaked, I took away his arms, and commanded him to dress immediately: then finding his companion asleep in the barn, I forced him likewise to arise, and mounting them both on their own horses, came at nine o'clock in the morning, with my two prisoners, to the other dragoons, at the place where we appointed to meet. From thence we rode straight to Glasgow, and arrived there about eight in the evening, after a journey of fifty miles, since we left the army at Bothwell the day before.

This was upon a Sunday, and although we met with many hundreds of people on the road, yet we travelled on to Glasgow without any opposition. I must here inform the reader, that although I had once before

Digitized by Google

before taken this very man, who wore the white hat, yet I did not know him to be mas John King already mentioned, until I was told so by the man of the house where I found him. I likewise forgot to mention, that King, who knew me well enough, as soon as he was taken in the house, entreated me to show him some favour, because he had married a woman of my name; I answered, "That is true, but first you got her with "bairn, and shall therefore now pay for disgracing "one of my name."

When we arrived near Glasgow, I sent a dragoon to inform the general, that mas John King was coming to kiss his hand: whereupon his excellency, accompanied with all the noblemen and officers, advanced as far as the bridge, to welcome me and my prisoner; where, it is very observable, that Graham, laird of Clavers, who came among the rest, made not the least reproach to mas John, in return of his insolent behaviour when that commander fled from Drumclog. Mas John was sent to Edinburgh next morning, under a guard, and hanged soon after: from hence I went to my quarters in Lanerk, sixteen miles from Glasgow; and about a month after (I hope the reader will excuse my weakness) I happened to dream that I found one Wilson, a captain among the rebels, at Bothwell bridge, in a bank of wood upon the river Clyde. This accident made so strong an impression on my mind, that as soon as I awoke, I took six and thirty dragoons, and got to the place by break of day; when I caused some of them to alight, and go into the wood, and set him up as hounds do a hare, while the rest were ordered to stand sentry, to prevent his escape. It seems I dreamt fortunately, for Wilson was actually in the wood, with five more of his company, as we afterward

Digitized by Google

afterward learned; who all seeing me and my party advancing, hid themselves in a little island on the river, among the broom that grew upon it. Wilson had not the good fortune to escape; for, as he was trying to get out of one copse into another, I met him, and guessing by his good clothes, and by the description I had received of him before, that he was the man I looked for, I seized and brought him to my quarters; and from thence immediately conveyed him to Edinburgh, where he was hanged; but might have preserved his life, if he would have condescended only to say, "God save the king." This he utterly refused to do, and thereby lost not only his life, but likewise an estate worth twenty-nine thousand marks Scots.

For this service, the duke of Queensberry, then high commissioner of Scotland, recommended me to the king, who rewarded me with the gift of Wilson's estate; but, although the grant passed the seals, and the sheriff put me in possession, yet I could neither sell it nor let it; nobody daring, for fear of the rebels, who had escaped at Bothwell bridge, either to purchase or farm it; by which means I never got a penny by the grant; and at the Revolution the land was taken from me and restored to Wilson's heirs.

The winter following, general Dalziel, with a battalion of the earl of Linlithgow's guards, the earl of Airlie's troop of horse, and captain Stuart's troop of dragoons, quartered at Kilmarnock, in the west, fifty miles from Edinburgh. Here the general, one day, happening to look on, while I was exercising the troop of dragoons, asked me, when I had done, whether I knew any one of my men, who was skilful in praying well in the style and tone of the covenanters?

Digitized by Google

ers? I immediately thought upon one James Gibb, who had been born in Ireland, and whom I made a dragoon. This man I brought to the general, assuring his excellency, that if I had raked Hell, I could not find his match for his skill in mimicking the covenanters. Whereupon the general gave him five pounds to buy him a great coat and a bonnet, and commanded him to find out the rebels, but to be sure to take care of himself among them. The dragoon went eight miles off that very night, and got admittance into the house of a notorious rebel, pretending he came from Ireland out of zeal for the cause, to assist at the fight of Bothwell bridge, and could not find an opportunity since, of returning to Ireland with safety; he said he durst not be seen in the day time, and therefore, after bewitching the family with his gifts of praying, he was conveyed in the dusk of the evening, with a guide, to the house of the next adjoining rebel; and thus, in the same manner, from one to another, till in a month's time he got through the principal of them in the west; telling the general, at his return, that whereever he came, he made the old wives, in their devout fits, tear off their biggonets and mutches; he likewise gave the general a list of their names and places of their abode, and into the bargain, brought back a good purse of money in his pocket. The general desired to know how he had prayed among them; he answered, that it was his custom, in his prayers, to send the king, the ministers of state, the officers of the army, with all their soldiers, and the episcopal clergy, all broadside to Hell; but particularly the general himself. What, said the general, did you send me to Hell, sir? Yea, replied the dragoon, you at the head of them, as their leader.

And

Digitized by Google

And here I do solemnly aver, upon my veracity and knowledge, that bishop Burnet, in the History of his Own Times, has, in a most false and scandalous manner, misrepresented the action at Bothwell bridge, and the behaviour of the episcopal clergy * in Scotland: for, as to the former, I was present in that engagement, which was performed in the manner I have related; and as to the latter, having travelled through most parts of that kingdom, particularly the north and west, I was well acquainted with them, and will take it to my death, that the reverse of this character, which Burnet gives of both, is the truth. And because that author is so unjust to the episcopal clergy, and so partial to the covenanters and their teachers, I do affirm, that I have known several among the latter sort guilty of those very vices wherewith this bishop brands the episcopal clergy. Among many others, I will produce one instance, rather to divert the reader than from any obloquy. One of those eight fanatick teachers who were permitted, at the Restoration, to keep their livings, came to sir John Carmichael's house, within a mile of Lanerk, where I was then upon a visit to sir John. We drank hard till it was late, and all the company retired, except sir John and myself. The teacher would needs give us prayers, but fell asleep before he had half done;

* "The clergy were so delighted, that they used to speak of "that time as the poets do of the golden age. They never in- "terceded for any compassion to their people. They looked on "the soldiery as their patrons; they were ever in their company, "complying with them in their excesses;—and, if they were "not much wronged, they rather led them into them, than "checked them for them. Things of so strange a pitch of "vice were told of them, that they seemed scarce credible." Burnet, vol. I, p. 334.

whereupon

Digitized by Google

whereupon sir John and I, setting a bottle and glass at his nose, left him upon his knees. The poor man sneaked off early the next morning, being, in all appearance, ashamed of his hypocrisy.

To return from this digression. The general sent out several parties, and me with a party among the rest; where, during the winter, and the following spring, I secured many of those whose names and abodes the canting dragoon had given a list of.

In July following, the general, by order of the council, commanded me to go, with a detachment of thirty horse and fifty dragoons, in pursuit of about one hundred and fifty rebels, who had escaped at Bothwell bridge, and ever since kept together in a body, up and down in Galloway. I followed them for five or six days, from one place to another; after which, on the 22d of July, they staid for me at Airs-moss, situate in the shire of Air, near the town of Cumlock. The moss is four miles long from east to west, and two broad. The rebels drew up at the east end, and consisted of thirty horse and one hundred and twenty foot. I faced them upon a rising ground with my thirty horse and fifty dragoons. The reason why the rebels chose this place to fight on, rather than a plain field, was for fear their horse might desert the foot, as they did on Hamilton-moor, near Bothwell bridge: and likewise, that in case they lost the day, they might save themselves by retreating into the moss.

I placed myself on the left, as judging, that the best officer the rebels had would command on the right. The action began about five in the afternoon, but lasted not long; for I ordered my men first to receive the enemy's fire, then to ride down the hill upon them,

Digitized by Google

them, and use their broadswords: they did so, and before the enemy had time to draw theirs, cut many of them down in an instant; whereupon they wheeled about, and captain Fowler, who commanded the rebels on the right, being then in the rear, advancing up to me, I gave him such a blow over the head with my broad sword, as would have cleaved his scull, had it not been defended by a steel cap. Fowler turning about, aimed a blow at me, but I warded it off, and with a back stroke cut the upper part of his head clean off, from the nose upward.

By this time, the rebels leaving their horses, fled to the moss; but the royalists pursuing them, killed about sixty, and took fourteen prisoners. Here Cameron, the famous covenanter, lost his life; and Haxton was taken prisoner, infamous for imbruing his hands in the blood of the archbishop of St. Andrews, as I have already mentioned; for which parricide, both his hands were afterward cut off, and he was hanged at Edinburgh.

But this victory cost me very dear; for being then in the rear, I rode into the moss after the rebels, where I overtook a dozen of them hacking and hewing one of my men, whose horse was bogged; his name was Elliot, a stout soldier; and one of Clavers's troop. He had received several wounds, and was at the point of being killed when I came to his relief. I shot one of the rogues dead with my carbine, which obliged the rest to let the poor man and his horse creep out of the hole, but at the same time drew all their fury upon myself; for Elliot made a shift to crawl out of the moss, leading his horse in his hand, but was wholly disabled from assisting his deliverer, and was not regarded by his enemies, who probably thought

Digitized by Google

thought he was mortally wounded, or indeed rather that they had no time to mind him; for I laid about me so fast, that they judged it best to keep off, and not to venture within my reach; till it unfortunately happened, that my horse slipped into the same hole out of which Elliot and his had just got. When they had me at this advantage, they began to show their courage, and manfully dealt their blows with their broadswords, from some of which, the carbine that hung down my back defended me a little. As I was paddling in the hole, the horse not able to get out, one of the rebels ran me through the small of the back with his broadsword, and at the same instant, two more wounded me under the ribs with their small ones. Then I threw myself over the head of my horse, taking the far pistol out of the holster in my left hand, and holding my broadsword in my right; and as one of the villains was coming hastily up to me, his foot slipped, and before he could recover himself, I struck my sword into his skull: but the fellow being big and heavy, snapped it asunder as he fell, within a span of the hilt. The rebels had me now at a great advantage: one of them made a stroke at me, which I warded off with the hilt of the sword that was left in my hand; but the force with which he struck the blow, and I kept it off, brought us both to the ground. However, I got up before him, clapped my pistol to his side, and shot him dead. As soon as this was done, another came behind me, and with some weapon or other, struck me such a blow on the head as laid me flat on my back; in which posture I remained a good while insensible; the rogues taking it for granted that I was dead scoured off,

Digitized by Google

off, fearing that by this time some of my men were returning back from the pursuit.

After some time, I a little recovered my senses, and strove to lift myself up, which one of the rogues happening to see at some distance, immediately returned, and said in my hearing, "God, the dog is "not dead yet;" then coming up to me, took his sword, and putting its hilt to his breast, and guiding it with both his hands, made a thrust at my belly; but my senses were now so far recovered, that I parried the thrust with a piece of the sword which remained still in my hand. The fellow, when he missed his aim, almost fell on his face; for the sword ran up to the hilt in the moss; and as he was recovering himself, I gave him a dab in the mouth with my broken sword, which very much hurt him: but he aiming a second thrust, which I had likewise the good fortune to put by, and having as before given him another dab in the mouth, he immediately went off, for fear of the pursuers, whereof many were now returning.

In this distress I made a shift, with much difficulty and pain, to get upon my feet, but my right leg being disabled by the wound I received from the broad-sword, I was forced to limp by the help of the carbine, which I made use of as a staff. I had lost my horse; for one of the rogues, when I had quitted him in the hole, led him away through the moss. I recovered him about a year after from the man to whom the rebel had sold him: and the said rebel, when he was at the gallows, confessed himself to be the same man who took away the horse at Airs-moss.

There was a Lancashire gentleman, one Mr. Parker, who came a volunteer to Airs-moss, with intent,

Digitized by Google

as he expressed himself, to see the sport. This gentleman, riding on my right hand at the time when we received the enemy's fire in the beginning of the action, was shot with a blunderbuss under the left shoulder; the wound was so large that a man might thrust his fist into it: yet when I desired him to fall back, and take care of his wound, he answered me, that he would first have his pennyworth out of the rogues; and accordingly followed us on horseback into the moss, as far as the horse could go without bogging. But, by that time, his wound so grievously pained him, with some other cuts he got in the pursuit, that he was forced to alight and sit on a dry spot of ground which he found in the moss, from whence he saw all that happened to me without being able to come to my assistance, any more than Elliot; who, having gotten to a rising ground, saw likewise all that had passed. However Mr. Parker, as I came limping toward him, could not forbear laughing, and said, "What a plague, have you got your "bones well paid too?" Then both of us made a shift to get up to Elliot on the rising ground.

The trumpeter being by this time returned, with some others, from the pursuit, was ordered to sound a call, which brought all the rest back, with the fourteen prisoners and Haxton among the rest, who was that day commander in chief among the rebels. Of the king's party but two were killed, Mr. Andrew Kerr, a gentleman of Clavers's own troop, and one M'Kabe, a dragoon in captain Stuart's troop, where I was lieutenant. The wounded were about eight or nine, beside Parker and Elliot. Elliot died the next day: he, Kerr, and M'Kabe, were honourably buried, by Mr. Brown; a gentleman who lived hard by, to whose

Digitized by Google

whose house their bodies were carried after the fight at the moss. An English lady, living about eight miles off, took care of Mr. Parker, but he died at her house a year after, of his wounds, very much lamented on account of his loyalty and valour.

When the fight was over, night coming on, I ordered all my men, except twelve dragoons, whom I kept to attend myself, to march with the prisoners, and those who were wounded, to Douglas, fourteen miles off, and to carry along with them Cameron's head. In the mean time, I and my party of dragoons went, that night, sixteen long miles to Lanerk, where the general and all the foot quartered; as well to acquaint him with what had been done, as to have my own wounds taken care of. I sent one of my dragoons before me with my message: whereupon the general himself, although it were after midnight, accompanied with the earls of Linlithgow, Mar, Ross, Hume, and the lord Dalhousie, came out to meet me at the gate: Dalhousie forced me to lodge in his own chamber, to which I was accordingly carried by two of my dragoons. After my wounds had been dressed in the presence of this noble company, who stood round about me, being very thirsty through the loss of blood, I drank the king's health, and the company's, in a large glass of wine and water; and then was laid in Dalhousie's own bed.

Next day the general leaving Lanerk, with the forces under his command, ordered a troop of horse and another of dragoons to attend me, till I should be able to travel up to Edinburgh for the better conveniency of physicians and surgeons. My wounds did not confine me to my bed; and in a month's time I went to Edinburgh on horseback by easy stages, where

Digitized by Google

I continued till Candlemas following, lingering of the wound I had received by the broadsword. My surgeon was the son of the same Dr. Irvin who first got me into the guards; but having unfortunately neglected to tie a string to the tent of green cloth, which he used for the wound, the tent slipped into my body, where it lay under my navel seven months and five days, and exceedingly pained me, not suffering me to sleep otherwise than by taking soporiferous pills. When the tent was first missing, neither the surgeon nor any body else ever imagined that it was lodged in my body, but supposed it to have slipped out of the wound while I slept, and carried away by some rat, or other vermin: the tent lying thus in my body, made it impossible that the wound could heal: wherefore, after lingering seven months, by the advice of a gentlewoman in the neighbourhood, I got leave to go for Ireland with my surgeon, and there try whether my native air would contribute any thing to my cure.

However insignificant this relation may be to the generality of readers, yet I cannot omit a lucky accident to which I owe my cure. While I continued at Edinburgh, I ordered some pipes of lead to be made in a mold, through which the thin corruption, which continually issued out of the wound caused by the tent remaining in my body, might be conveyed as through a faucet. These pipes I cut shorter by degrees, in proportion as I imagined the wound was healing at the bottom; till at last, by mistaking the true cause, the tent continuing still where it did, the pipes became too short for the use intended; wherefore, when I was in Ireland, I made a coarse pipe myself, which was long enough: this pipe, after the wound

Digitized by Google

wound was washed with brandy, always remained in my body till the next dressing; but being made without art, and somewhat jagged at the end, it happened one morning, when the pipe was drawn out as usual, in order to have the wound washed, the tent followed, to the great surprise of my father, who, at that time, was going to dress the wound; my surgeon being then at Castle-Irvin, where I had left him with his brother Dr. Irvin, at sir Gerard Irvin's house; the same gentleman who was delivered out of Derry gaol by my father, as I have related in the beginning of these memoirs.

The night before the tent was drawn out of my body, having not slept a wink, I thought myself in the morning somewhat feverish, and therefore desired my father to send for Dr. Lindsey, to let me blood. In the mean time, slumbering a little, I dreamed that the covenanters were coming to cut my throat; under this apprehension I awaked, and found my neighbour captain Saunderson in my chamber, who was come to visit me. I then called for my father to dress my wound; when the tent followed the pipe, as I have already said, to my great joy, for then I knew I should soon be well. I therefore ordered my horse to be got ready, and rode out with captain Saunderson and my father, to meet Dr. Lindsey, who hearing the joyful news, carried us to a gentleman's house, where we drank very heartily: then I returned home and slept almost four and twenty hours. Two days after, Dr. Irvin and his brother, the surgeon, came to my father's house, where the doctor being informed in the circumstances of my cure, severely chid his brother for his neglect, swearing he had a mind to shoot him, and that, if I had died, my blood would

Digitized by Google

have been charged on his head. He then ordered me a remedy, which would heal up the wound in twenty days. This fell out in the beginning of May; at which time taking leave of my father and other friends in Ireland, I returned to Edinburgh, where, before the end of that month, my wound was perfectly healed up; but I was never after so able to bear fatigues as I had hitherto been.

The duke of York was arrived at Edinburgh the Michaelmas before, where the general, from the time he left Lanerk in July, continued with the guards; the rest of the forces quartered up and down in other places. The general, after my arrival, coming every day to see me, in his way, as he went to the duke's court, did me the honour to mention me and my services to his royal highness, who was desirous to see me; I was admitted to kiss his hand, and ordered to sit down, in regard to my honourable wounds, which would not suffer me to stand, without great pain. I cannot conceal this mark of favour and distinction, shown me by a great prince, although I am very sensible it will be imputed to vanity. I must remember likewise, that upon my return to Edinburgh, happening to overtake the general in the street, and gently touching him, his excellency turning in a great surprise, cried out, "O God, man, are you living?" I answered that I was, and hoped to do the king and his excellency farther service.

After I had continued a month with my friends in Edinburgh, who all congratulated with me upon my recovery, I repaired to the troop at Lanerk, where I often ranged with a party through the west, to find out the straggling remains of the covenanting rebels; but for some time without success, till a week before Christmas,

Digitized by Google

Christmas, after the duke of York succeeded to the crown, and a year and a half after I was cured. Having drank hard one night, I dreamed that I had found captain David Steele, a notorious rebel, in one of the five farmers houses on a mountain in the shire of Clydesdale, and parish of Lismahego, within eight miles of Hamilton, a place that I was well acquainted with. This man was head of the rebels, since the affair of Airs-moss; having succeeded to Haxton, who had been there taken, and afterward hanged, as the reader has already heard: for, as to Robert Hamilton, who was their commander in chief at Bothwell bridge, he appeared no more among them, but fled, as it was believed, to Holland.

Steele, and his father before him, held a farm in the estate of Hamilton, within two or three miles of that town. When he betook himself to arms, the farm lay waste, and the duke could find no other person, who would venture to take it; whereupon his grace sent several messages to Steele, to know the reason why he kept the farm waste. The duke received no other answer, than that he would keep it waste, in spite of him and the king too: whereupon his grace, at whose table I had always the honour to be a welcome guest, desired I would use my endeavours to destroy that rogue, and I would oblige him for ever.

I must here take leave to inform the reader, that the duke of Hamilton's friendship for me was founded upon the many services he knew I had done the publick, as well as upon the relation I bore to sir Gerard Irvin; the person whom, of all the world, his grace most loved and esteemed, ever since the time they had served in arms together for the king, in the High-

Digitized by Google

lands, with my lord Glencairn and sir Arthur Forbes (father to the present earl of Granard) after the king's defeat at Worcester, during the time of the usurpation.

To return therefore to my story; when I awaked out of my dream, as I had done before in the affair of Wilson (and I desire the same apology I made in the introduction to these memoirs may serve for both) I presently rose, and ordered thirty-six dragoons to be at the place appointed by break of day. When we arrived there, I sent a party to each of the five farmers houses. This villain Steele had murdered above forty of the king's subjects in cold blood; and as I was informed, had often laid snares to entrap me; but it happened, that although he usually kept a gang to attend him, yet at this time he had none, when he stood in the greatest need. One of my party found him in one of the farmers houses, just as I happened to dream. The dragoons, first, searched all the rooms below without success; till two of them hearing somebody stirring over their heads, went up a pair of turnpike stairs. Steele had put on his clothes, while the search was making below: the chamber where he lay was called the chamber of Deese, which is the name given to a room where the laird lies when he comes to a tenant's house. Steele, suddenly opening the door, fired a blunderbuss down at the two dragoons, as they were coming up the stairs; but the bullets, grazing against the side of the turnpike, only wounded and did not kill them. Then Steele violently threw himself down the stairs among them, and made toward the door to save his life, but lost it upon the spot; for the dragoons who guarded the house dispatched him with their broadswords. I was not with the

Digitized by Google

the party when he was killed, being at that time employed in searching at one of the other four houses, but I soon found what had happened, by hearing the noise of the shot made with the blunderbuss; from hence I returned straight to Lanerk, and immediately sent one of the dragoons express to general Drummond at Edinburgh.

General Dalziel died about Michaelmas this year, and was succeeded by lieutenant general Drummond, who was likewise my very good friend.

But I cannot here let pass the death of so brave and loyal a commander, as general Dalziel, without giving the reader some account of him, as far as my knowledge, or inquiry could reach*.

Thomas Dalziel, among many other officers, was taken prisoner at the unfortunate defeat at Worcester, and sent to the Tower; from whence, I know not by what means, he made his escape, and went to Muscovy; where the czar then reigning made him his general†: but some time after the restoration of the royal family, he gave up his commission, and repairing to king Charles the Second, was, in consi-

* Burnet represents this general as "acting the Muscovite too "grossly," and "threatening to spit men, and roast them."— "He killed some in cold blood, or rather in hot blood; for he "was then drunk, when he ordered one to be hanged, because "he would not tell where his father was, for whom he was then "in search." Vol. I, p 334.

† He served the emperor of Russia, as one of the generals of his forces against the Polanders and Tartars, till the year 1665, when he was recalled by king Charles the Second; and thereafter did command his majesty's forces at the defeat of the rebels, at Pentland hills in Scotland; and continued lieutenant general in Scotland, when his majesty had any standing forces in that kingdom, till the year of his death, 1685. Granger, III, 380.

deration

Digitized by Google

deration of his eminent services, constituted commander in chief of his majesty's forces in Scotland; in which post he continued till his death, excepting only one fortnight, when he was superseded by the duke of Monmouth, some days before the action at Bothwell bridge, as I have already related. He was bred up very hardy from his youth, both in diet and clothing. He never wore boots, nor above one coat, which was close to his body, with close sleeves, like those we call jockey coats. He never wore a peruke; nor did he shave his beard since the murder of king Charles the First. In my time, his head was bald, which he covered only with a beaver hat, the brim of which was not above three inches broad. His beard was white and bushy, and yet reached down almost to his girdle. He usually went to London once or twice in a year, and then only to kiss the king's hand, who had a great esteem for his worth and valour. His unusual dress and figure, when he was in London, never failed to draw after him a great crowd of boys, and other young people, who constantly attended at his lodgings, and followed him with huzzas, as he went to court, or returned from it. As he was a man of humour, he would always thank them for their civilities, when he left them at the door, to go in to the king; and would let them know exactly at what hour he intended to come out again, and return to his lodgings. When the king walked in the park, attended by some of his courtiers, and Dalziel in his company, the same crowds would always be after him, showing their admiration at his beard and dress, so that the king could hardly pass on for the crowd; upon which his majesty bid the devil take Dalziel, for bringing such a rabble of boys together, to have their guts squeezed out, while

Digitized by Google

while they gaped at his long beard and antique habit; requesting him, at the same time (as Dalziel used to express it) to shave and dress like other Christians, to keep the poor bairns out of danger. All this could never prevail on him to part with his beard, but yet in compliance to his majesty, he went once to court in the very height of the fashion: but as soon as the king and those about him had laughed sufficiently at the strange figure he made, he reassumed his usual habit, to the great joy of the boys, who had not discovered him in his fashionable dress.

When the duke of York succeeded to the crown, general Dalziel was resolved still to retain his loyalty, although, at the same time, he often told his friends, that all things were going wrong at court; but death came very seasonably, to rescue him from the difficulties he was likely to be under, between the notions he had of duty to his prince on one side, and true zeal for his religion on the other.

I must now resume a little my discourse upon captain Steele. Some time before the action in which he was killed, general Drummond, who was then newly made commander in chief, sent for me in haste, to attend him in Edinburgh: my way lay through a very strong pass, hard by Airs-moss, and within a mile of Cumlock: as I was going through Cumlock, a friend there told me, that Steele, with a party, waited for me at the pass. I had with me only one dragoon and a drummer: I ordered the latter to gallop on straight to the pass, and when he got thither, to beat a dragoon march, while I with the dragoon should ride along the by-path, on the edge of the moss. When Steele and his men heard the drum, they scoured cross the by-path, into the moss, apprehending

Digitized by Google

prehending that a strong party was coming in search of them: but either I or the dragoon (I forgot which) shot one of the rebels dead, as he crossed us to get into the moss. To put an end to this business of Steele. When the dragoon, whom I sent express, had delivered his message to general Drummond, he was just setting out for his country house at Dumblain; but returned to his lodgings, and wrote me a letter, that he would send for me up after the holydays, and recommend me to the government, to reward me for my services. He faithfully kept his word, but I received nothing more than promises.

Steele was buried in the churchyard of Lismahego, by some of his friends; who, after the revolution, erected a fair monument, on pillars, over his grave, and caused an epitaph to be engraved on the stone, in words to this effect:

> Here lieth the body of captain David Steele, a saint, who was murdered by John Creichton, [*with the date underneath.*]

Some of my friends burlesqued this epitaph, in the following manner:

> Here lies the body of saint Steele,
> Murdered by John Creichton, that de'el.

Duke Hamilton, in queen Anne's time, informed me of this honour done to that infamous rebel: and when I had said to his grace, that I wished he had ordered his footmen to demolish the monument, the duke answered, he would not have done so for five hundred pounds, because it would be an honour to me as long as it lasted.

The

Digitized by Google

The last summer, about the end of May, if I remember right (and I desire to be excused for not always relating things in the order when they happened) the marquis of Argyle, after having escaped out of the castle of Edinburgh, into Holland, returned to invade Scotland, to support the duke of Monmouth's pretensions to the crown, as was generally believed. He landed in his own country, in the Highlands, with a party of Dutch, and some Scottish gentlemen, who had fled for treason; among whom sir John Cochran was of the greatest note: whereupon the government ordered the marquis of Atholl, and Mr. Owen Cameron, laird of Lochiel, to raise their clans, and march with their party against Argyle. They did so, and, in the evening, pitched their camp close by him. Here in the night, Cameron, patroling with a party, met another of his own men, and taking them for enemies, because they had lost the word in their cups, killed eight or nine; among whom two or three happened to be persons of note; the friends of those who were killed, resolving, if possible, to have him hanged, he was obliged to ride post to the king. He went to his majesty in the dress in which he had travelled; and the king, being already informed how the accident happened, instead of suffering him to tell his story, commanded him to draw his broad-sword, intending to knight him therewith: but Cameron could not draw it, because the scabbard had got wet on the way. The king observing the confusion he was in, said, he knew the reason that kept the sword in the sheath; adding that he never failed to draw it, in the service of his father, his brother, and himself: whereupon he was knighted with another sword, with the title of sir Owen Cameron.

He

Digitized by Google

He returned to Edinburgh, and from thence went as a volunteer, to serve in the standing army, which was then moving toward the coast of Galloway, to prevent Argyle from landing. For, upon the opposition he found from the marquis of Atholl, and his men, with their assistance in the Highlands, he shipped his forces, and sailed round to the west, hoping to land there. But the army moving along the coast, always in sight of him, compelled him to return the way he came, until he landed in his own country again. From thence, after gathering what supplies of men he could, he marched, and encamped in the evening, within two or three miles of Glasgow. But the king's army, having sent out scouts to discover what way he took, encamped over against him the same evening, on an eminence: there being a bog between both armies.

The king's forces consisted of the earl of Linlithgow's regiment of foot-guards, the earl of Mar's of foot, Clavers's of horse, Dunmore's of dragoons, Buchan's of foot, and Levingston's of horse-guards, with some gentlemen of quality, volunteers; among whom the earl of Dunbarton was of the greatest note.

Here the two armies lay in sight of each other; but, before morning, Argyle was gone, his Highlanders having deserted him; and then the king's army went to refresh themselves at Glasgow, waiting till it could be known which way Argyle had fled. It was soon understood that he had crossed the Clyde, at Kilpatrick; and that sir John Cochran lay with a party, in a stonedike park, about ten miles off. The lord Ross was therefore dispatched, with a party of horse, and captain Cleland, who was now my captain (my friend Stuart being dead) with another of dragoons,

Digitized by Google

dragoons, to find them out: when they came up to the park, where sir John Cochran lay with his Dutch, they fired at one another, and some of the king's soldiers fell, among whom captain Cleland was one; whereupon the troop was given to sir Adam Blair (who was likewise wounded in that rash engagement) although, upon duke Hamilton's application to the king, I had been promised to succeed Cleland. But sir Adam, and secretary Melford, being brothers-in-law, that interest prevailed.

I must desire the reader's pardon, for so frequently interspersing my own private affairs with those of the publick; but what I chiefly proposed, was to write my own memoirs, and not a history of the times, farther than I was concerned in them.

Night coming on, the king's party withdrew, leaving sir John Cochran in the park; who, notwithstanding this little success, desired his followers to shift for themselves, and left them before morning. Argyle next evening was found alone, a mile above Greenock, at the waterside, endeavouring to get into a little boat, and grappling with the owner thereof, a poor weaver. It seems he wanted presence of mind, to engage the man with a piece of money, to set him on the other side. In the mean time, sir John Shaw, riding with some gentlemen to Greenock, and seeing the struggle, seized the earl, and carried him to Glasgow, from whence he was sent with a strong guard to Edinburgh, and some time after beheaded.

The next day, the army marched toward the borders against the duke of Monmouth; but an express arriving of his defeat, the troops were commanded to repair to their several quarters.

I shall

Digitized by Google

I shall here occasionally relate an unfortunate accident, which happened this summer in Scotland.

M'Donnel, laird of Cappagh in the Highlands, within eight miles of Inverlochy, was unjustly possessed, as most men believed, for many years of an estate, which in right belonged to the laird of Mackintosh. Both these gentlemen were well affected to the king. The laird of Cappagh, after sowing time was over, had gone that summer, as it was his custom, to make merry with his clans, on the mountains, till the time of harvest should call him home. But in his absence, Mackintosh, and his clans, assisted with a party of the army, by order of the government, possessed himself of Cappagh's estate: whereupon M'Donnel, and his clans, returning from the mountains, set upon the enemy, killed several gentlemen among them, and took Mackintosh himself prisoner. M'Donnel had given strict orders to his men, not to kill any of the army. But captain M'Kenzie, who commanded on the other side, making a shot at one of M'Donnel's men, who was pursuing his adversary, the man, discharging his pistol at the captain, shot him in the knee, who, after having been carried fifty miles to Inverness, to a surgeon, died of his wound.

Soon after, the government ordered me to detach sixty dragoons, with a lieutenant, cornet, and standard, and to march with captain Streighton, and two hundred of the foot-guards, against the M'Donnels; to destroy man, woman, and child, pertaining to the laird of Cappagh, and to burn his houses and corn *.

Upon

* The reader, perhaps, will not think very honourably of the government, or of Creichton's employment under it, when he reads the above particulars. An order from the king to get possession

Digitized by Google

Upon the approach of our party, M'Donnel, laird of Cappagh, dismissing his prisoners, retired farther into the mountains; whereupon we who were sent against him continued to destroy all the houses and corn, from the time of Lammas to the tenth of September: and then we advanced toward the borders, to join the Scotch army, which at that time was marching toward England, against the prince of Orange, who then intended an invasion. We arrived there the first of October, after a march of two hundred miles.

General Drummond being then dead, James Douglas, brother to the duke of Queensberry, succeeded him as commander in chief: and Graham laird of Clavers (about this time created lord Dundee*) was major general. On the first of October the army passed the Tweed, and drew up on the banks, on the English side; where the general gave a strict charge

session of a contested estate by force, and a grant of a military power to effect it, was illegal, arbitrary, and tyrannical, totally inconsistent with the liberty of the people, and the coronation oath of the king: but to give orders to revenge an opposition by the murder, not only of the men, but of all the women and children belonging to the injured party, was an instance of cruelty that disgraced human nature, and would have been a crime of the deepest die, if there had been no positive institution, and neither law nor compact existing upon earth.

* John Graham, created viscount Dundee by king James, was a major general of the Scottish army, and a privy counsellor, in the reign of Charles II. He was then employed in reducing the west of Scotland, and in forcing the dissenters to comply with the constitution of the established church, by imposing heavy taxes upon them, which was one of the methods of making proselytes in that kingdom. But he was a man of too noble a nature, to execute his orders in their full rigour. Granger, IV, 277.

Digitized by Google

one of his battalions revolted to the prince, under the conduct only of a corporal, whose name was Kemp. However, Douglas assured the king, that this defection happened against his will; and yet, when the officers were ready to fire upon the deserters, his compassion was such, that he would not permit them.

After this, the earl of Dunbarton, and the lord Dundee, with all the officers who adhered to the king, were ordered to meet his majesty at Uxbridge, where he designed to fight the prince: the earl of Feversham got thither before the king and the army arrived. When the forces drew together, every party sent an officer to the earl of Feversham, to receive his commands. I attended his lordship for my lord Dundee, and was ordered, with the rest, to wait till the king came to dinner, his majesty being expected within half an hour; but it fell out otherwise; for the earl, to his great surprise, received a letter from the king, signifying that his majesty was gone off, and had no farther service for the army. When I carried this news to my lord Dundee, neither his lordship, nor the lords Linlithgow and Dunmore, could forbear falling into tears: after which, being at a loss what course to take, I said to my lord Dundee, that as he had brought us out of Scotland, he should convey us thither back again in a body; adding, that the forces might lie that night at Watford, six miles off: my advice was followed, and I went before to get billets, where to quarter the men. My lord Dundee ordered all to be ready at sound of trumpet, and to unbridle their horses no longer than while they were eating their oats. The townsmen contrived to give out a report, before day, that the prince of Orange was

Digitized by Google

was approaching, hoping to fright us away with a false alarm: whereupon we marched out, but at the same time drew up in a strong enclosure, at the town's end: resolving to fight the prince if he should advance toward us. My lord Dundee dispatched me immediately, to discover whether the report of the prince's approach were true: but I only met a messenger with a letter from his highness, to my lord Dundee, which I received and delivered to his lordship. The contents of it, as far as I am able to recollect, were as follow:

"My lord DUNDEE,

"I understand you are now at Watford, and that "you keep your men together; I desire you may stay "there till farther orders, and, upon my honour, none "in my army shall touch you.

"W. H. Prince of ORANGE."

Upon the receipt of this letter, our forces returned into the town, set up their horses, and refreshed themselves. About three in the afternoon, there came intelligence, that the king would be at Whitehall that night, having returned from Feversham, whither he had fled in disguise, and was ill treated by the rabble before they discovered him. Upon this incident, the lords Dundee *, Dunmore, Linlith-

* He advised the king to three things; one was, to fight the prince: another, to go to him in person, and demand his business; and the third, to make his way into Scotland. James had once resolved to pursue the last advice; but that, in the fluctuating state of his mind, was soon followed by another resolution. Upon the king's departure, Dundee applied himself to the prince of Orange, to whom he spoke with all that frankness which was natural to him; but met with a very cool reception. Granger, IV, 278.

Digitized by Google

gow, and myself, who desired leave to go with my colonel, took horse; and, arriving at Whitehall a little after the king, had the honour to kiss his majesty's hand.

The next morning, the earl of Feversham was sent by the king, with some proposals to the prince of Orange, who was then at Windsor: where his lordship was put in arrest by the prince's command, who sent the marquis of Halifax, the earl of Shrewsbury, and the lord Delamere (if I rightly remember) to the king, with his highness's order that his majesty should remove from Whitehall, next day, before twelve o'clock. This order was given about one in the morning: at the same time, a barge was brought to Whitehall, and a Dutch guard set about the king, without his knowledge, but with directions to see him safe, if he had a mind to go on board any ship, in order to his escape *. A ship, it seems, was likewise prepared, and his majesty, attended by the lords Dunmore, Arran, and Middleton, went on board; and then the three lords returned to London. The prince arrived at St. James's about two hours after his majesty's departure †: and the earl of Arran went, among the

* "A guard went with him, that left him in full liberty, and "paid him rather more respect than his own guards had done of "late. Most of that body, as it happened, were papists. So "when he went to mass, they went in, and assisted very reve-"rently. And when they were asked, how they could serve in "an expedition that was intended to destroy their own religion, "one of them answered, His soul was God's, but his sword was "the prince of Orange's. The king was so much delighted with "this answer, that he repeated it to all that came about him." Burnet, vol. II, p. 548.

† "It happened to be a very rainy day; and yet great num-"bers came to him. But, after they had stood long in the wet, he

Digitized by Google

the rest, to attend his highness *: to whom being introduced, he told the prince, that the king, his master, had commanded him, upon his departure, to wait upon his highness, and receive his commands. The prince replied, he was glad to see him, and had an esteem for him and all men of honour. Then turning aside to some other persons, who were making their court; Dr. Burnet, soon after made bishop of Salisbury, who had been the earl of Arran's governor, coming up to his lordship, cried, "Ay, my lord "Arran, you are now come in, and think to make a "merit when the work is done." To this insult the earl, in the hearing of many, replied only, "Come, "doctor, we ken ane another weell enough †." And the earl's own father told the prince, that if this young fellow were not secured, he would, perhaps, give his highness some trouble. Whereupon this noble young lord was sent to the tower, where he continued about

"he disappointed them: for he, who loved neither shows nor "shoutings, went through the park: and even this trifle helped "to set people's spirits on the fret." Burnet, vol. II, p. 548.

* "Now that the prince was come, all the bodies about the town "came to welcome him. The bishops came next day: only the "archbishop of Canterbury [Dr. Sancroft, afterward deprived "for not taking the oaths] though he had once agreed to it, yet "would not come. The clergy of London came next. The "city, and a great many other bodies, came likewise, and ex- "pressed a great deal of joy for the deliverance wrought for "them by the prince's means. Old serjeant Maynard came with "the men of the law. He was then near ninety; and yet he said "the liveliest thing that was heard of on that occasion. The "prince took notice of his great age; and said, 'That he be- "lieved he had outlived all the men of the law of his time.' "He answered, 'He should have outlived the law itself, if his "highness had not come over.'" Ibid. p. 549.

† Bishop Burnet, who on many occasions had a retentive memory, seems to have forgotten this curious little anecdote.

Digitized by Google

a year, and then returned to Scotland: and soon after, the young lord Forbes, now earl Granard, was likewise imprisoned in the same place. King William had made several advances to his lordship, as he did to many other persons of quality, to engage him in his service; and sending for him one day, asked him, why he did not take care of his regiment? My lord Forbes, not being provided on a sudden with a better answer, told the king, that having been born in Ireland, he had not credit enough, he believed, to raise men to fill up the places of the papists in his regiment. King William thereupon said, he would take that charge upon himself. Lord Forbes, having now recollected himself, said, he had likewise another reason why he found it necessary to decline his service, but was unwilling to mention it, not having the least intention to disoblige his highness. The prince desired that he might do it freely, and it should not disoblige him; whereupon my lord said, that having sworn to retain his loyalty to king James, he could not, in honour and conscience, without his master's permission, enter into the service of another prince, during his majesty's life. Whereupon king William, soon after, thought it proper to send him to the tower; but however, was so generous, as in the time of his confinement, to send one of the clerks of the treasury with an order to pay him two hundred pounds, as very reasonably thinking, that under the loss of his regiment, as well as his rents in Ireland, he might want money to support himself. My lord Forbes having asked the clerk, by whose direction he brought that sum? And the other answering, that he was only ordered to pay the money

to

Digitized by Google

to his lordship, and to take his receipt, conjectured this present to have proceeded from king William; and therefore desired the clerk to present his most humble respects and thanks to his highness, and to let him know, that as he had never done him any service, he could not, in honour, receive any marks of his bounty.

Upon this subject I must add one more particular, that when my lord Forbes arrived with his regiment out of Ireland, and attended on king James, he advised his majesty to fight the prince upon the first opportunity after his landing, before his party should grow strong: but those about the king, who had already engaged in the other interest, would not suffer that advice to be followed.

I now return to my lord Dundee, and my lord Dunmore. Their lordships acted no longer as colonels, when they understood that the prince intended to place himself on the throne during his majesty's life: but the first, with the twenty-four troopers, who followed him up from Watford, left London, and repaired, with the utmost expedition, to his own castle: and the second, some time after, to Edinburgh, lying both quiet until the convention of the states of Scotland was called.

After their lordships were gone to Scotland, I went to Watford, where my lord Kilsyth, as lieutenant colonel, commanded the lord Dunmore's regiment of dragoons; the rest of the army, which had been there, being gone to other places. Then major general M'Coy ordered the lord Kilsyth to march the regiment from place to place, until they should come to Congerton, a town in Cheshire. Here they quartered, when the prince and princess of Orange were pro-

Digitized by Google

proclaimed king and queen of England, &c. by the sheriff and three or four bailiffs. It happened to be a very stormy day; and when the sheriff had done his office, a crackbrained fellow, at the head of a great rabble, proclaimed the duke of Monmouth king, to the great diversion of the regiment, not believing he had been beheaded.

When my lord Dundee refused to serve the prince of Orange sir Thomas Levingston, of my lord Kilsyth's family, got the regiment. This gentleman was born in Holland, and often used to raise recruits in Scotland; upon which account, he was well known to the regiment. He came down post to Congerton, at supper, told the officers, that he was sent to know, which of them would serve king William, and which would not? Now the oath of allegiance to that prince having not been offered to that regiment, one of the company answered, that we, having sworn allegiance to king James, could not, in conscience and honour, draw our swords against him; whereupon sir Thomas, drinking a health to king James upon his knees, answered, that he wished he might be damned, whenever he should command them to break that oath. And, in order to ingratiate himself farther with the regiment, added, that he would return to London next day, for a command to march them straight to Scotland, where their wives and friends were; and likewise to procure a captain's commission for me, since sir Adam Blair, who commanded the troop in which I was lieutenant, had refused to serve king William; both which he accordingly obtained.

When he returned from London, he marched with the regiment directly through Berwick into Scotland; and as they passed by Edinburgh (the castle whereof

was

Digitized by Google

was kept for king James by the duke of Gordon) sir Thomas and my lord Kilsyth went into the town, to receive duke Hamilton's command, who was then high commissioner; and some other officers went in at the same time,-to see their wives and friends.

The duke asked sir Thomas, where I was? And, being informed that I was gone to Stirling, desired I might be sent for. Upon my attending his grace, he was pleased to say, that he had been always my friend; and that he now had it in his power to provide for me, if I would be true to my trust (for he supposed I had taken the oath to king William) and upon my answer, that I would be true to what I had sworn, the duke replied, it was very well.

Upon this occasion, and before I proceed farther, I think it will be proper to make some apology for my future conduct; because I am conscious, that many people, who are in another interest, may be apt to think and speak hardly of me: but I desire they would please to consider, that the Revolution was then an event altogether new, and had put many men much wiser than myself at a loss how to proceed. I had taken the oath of allegiance to king James; and having been bred up in the strictest principles of loyalty, could not force my conscience to dispense with that oath, during his majesty's life. All those persons of quality in Scotland to whom I had been most obliged, and on whom I chiefly depended, did still adhere to that prince. Those people whom, from my youth, I had been taught to abhor: whom, by the commands of my superiours, I had constantly treated as rebels; and who consequently conceived an irreconcileable animosity against me; were, upon this great change, the highest in favour and employments. And

Digitized by Google

And lastly, the established religion in Scotland, which was episcopal, under which I had been educated, and to which I had always born the highest veneration, was utterly destroyed in that kingdom (although preserved in the other two) and the presbyterian kirk, which had ever been my greatest aversion, exalted in its stead.

Upon all these considerations, I hope every candid reader will be so just to believe, that supposing me in an errour, I acted at least sincerely, and according to the dictates of my conscience; and as it is manifest, without any worldly view: for, I had then considerable offers made me, and in all probability should have been greatly advanced, if I could have persuaded myself to accept them.

Having said thus much to excuse my conduct from that time forward, I shall now proceed to relate facts and passages just as they happened; and avoid, as much as possible, giving any offence.

My lord Dunmore being then at Edinburgh, I thought it my duty to pay my respects to his lordship, who had been also my colonel. He was pleased to invite me to dine with him that day at a tavern; where he said lieutenant general Douglas (who had left England, a little before, on some pretence or other) the lord Kilsyth, and captain Murray (all his ain lads, as his lordship expressed himself) were to meet him. I objected against Douglas, that he was not to be trusted; this was the same man, who afterward was lieutenant general of king William's army in Ireland, against king James; and whose name will never be forgot in that kingdom, on account of his many ravages and barbarities committed there; but his lordship answered, that he would pawn his life for his

Digitized by Google

his honesty; because my lord Dundee had assured him, that the lieutenant general had given him his faith and honour, to be with him in five days, if he marched to the hills to declare for king James. Whereupon I submitted my scruples to my colonel's judgment; and accordingly we all met together at the tavern.

Dinner was no sooner done, than we heard the news that king James was landed in Ireland: then Douglas taking a beer glass, and looking round him, said, gentlemen, we have all eat of his bread, and here is his health; which he drank off, on his knees; and all the company did the same: then filling another bumper, he drank damnation to all who would ever draw a sword against him.

I then returned to Stirling, and soon after the states of Scotland met. To this convention my lord Dundee went incognito; lest the rabble, who had threatened his person, should assault him in the streets. He made a speech to the house, to the following purpose: "That he came thither as a peer of the "realm to serve his majesty; and that if the king had "no service for him, he hoped that honourable "assembly would protect him as a peaceable subject "from the rage of his enemies."

Upon receiving an answer from the states, that they could not possibly do it, he slipped out of the house, and privately withdrew from the town; followed by the twenty-four troopers, who had attended him thither: and, as he rode by the castle, seeing the duke of Gordon, who commanded it, walking on the walls, he charged his grace, to keep the place for king James, till he should hear farther from him; who was

Digitized by Google

was then going, he said, to appear in the field for his majesty.

His lordship had no sooner left the town, than one major Bunting, with a party by order from the convention, followed, with directions to seize him; whereupon my lord Dundee, commanding his attendants to march on gently, stopped to speak with the major; and understanding his errand, advised him to return, or he would send him back to his masters in a pair of blankets, as he expressed himself. The major (who perhaps was no enemy to his lordship) returned accordingly, and my lord arrived at his castle, where he staid only that night: for in the morning, taking four thousand pounds with him, he went into the Highlands, to sir Owen Cameron; where he was soon joined by the laird of Cappagh, who, some time before, had been driven out of his estate by order of king James (as I have already related) and by many other gentlemen of quality.

Major general M'Coy, coming to Edinburgh at this juncture, was ordered to march the forces, which he brought with him, against my lord Dundee. These forces consisted of three or four regiments of foot, and one of horse: beside sir Thomas Levingston's of dragoons. They stopped, in their march, a night or two at Dundee. The first night, I got privately into the castle (as it had been agreed between my lord Kilsyth and me) and there assured my lady Dundee, that the regiment of dragoons, in which I served, should be at her lord's service, whenever he pleased to command; whereof her ladyship gave notice next day to her husband; who sent me a note, by a ragged Highlander, which I received as we were on our march from the town of Dundee toward the Highlands.

Digitized by Google

lands. The contents of my lord's note were, "That "he had written to the king, to send him two thou- "sand foot, and one thousand horse out of Ireland; "and that as soon as those forces were arrived, he "would expect me with a regiment of dragoons."

When major general M'Coy came within sight of my lord Dundee, night coming on, obliged him to halt, which gave opportunity to his lordship to retreat in the morning; but M'Coy followed him all day; whereupon, facing about, my lord advanced toward him, which caused the major general to retreat in his turn. Thus we spent about three weeks, sometimes pursuing, and sometimes pursued; our leader, M'Coy, still writing every post, for new supplies; till at last, one regiment of dragoons, and another of foot, came to his assistance on the 5th of June 1689. When this reinforcement came, he got intelligence of my lord Kilsyth's intention and mine, of going over with the regiment to my lord Dundee.

All people agreed, that lieutenant general Douglas, who had made so many solemn professions of his loyalty to king James, and whose health he had drank on his knees, was the very person who had given this intelligence to M'Coy; because he alone knew what had passed at the tavern, where we dined: and because, instead of going with Dundee, as he had promised him upon his faith and honour, he had rid post for London.

From this period, my troubles began; for I was then sent up to Edinburgh, and there imprisoned in the tolbooth, together with my lord Kilsyth, captain Levingston, captain Murray, and lieutenant Murray; each of us in a separate dungeon: with orders that none should be permitted to speak with us, except through

Digitized by Google

through the keyhole: and in this miserable condition we lay for two months.

My lord Kilsyth's friends were under great apprehensions that I would betray his lordship. But my lord did me the justice to assure them, that I would suffer the worst extremity rather than be guilty of so infamous an action; which, he said, they should find, upon any temptation that might offer. When we had been close confined in our dungeons for two months, we were brought before the council, one by one, to be examined, concerning our knowledge of my lord Kilsyth's intention to carry off the regiment. Levingston and the two Murrays, having not been privy to that design, were able to discover nothing to his lordship's prejudice; and were likewise gentlemen of too much honour, to purchase their liberty with a lie: whereupon they were remanded back to their several dungeons. It was my turn to be next examined; and I was strongly suspected; but notwithstanding my liberty was promised me if I would discover all I knew of the matter, the lord advocate at the same time also urging I must have certainly been privy to it; I positively denied any knowledge of that affair, adding, that I believed my lord Kilsyth had never entertained such a design; or, if he had, that it was altogether improbable his lordship should impart it to me, a poor stranger born in Ireland, and yet keep it a secret from gentlemen of the kingdom, in whom he might much better confide. This I still repeated, and stood to with great firmness, even after I saw the hangman, with the torturing boots * stand-

* This extraordinary species of torture used to be performed by putting a pair of iron boots close on the legs, and driving wedges between the leg and the boot. See Burnet, vol. I, p. 333.

ing

Digitized by Google

ing at my back: whereupon I was likewise returned to my dungeon.

The council, although they could force no confession from me, or my companions, that might affect my lord Kilsyth, on whose estate their hearts were much set, yet resolved to make a sacrifice of some one among us. But, the other gentlemen being of their own kindred and country, and I a stranger, as well as much hated for prosecuting the covenanters (who, by the change of the times, measures, and opinions, were now grown into high favour with the government, as I have before mentioned) the lot fell on me, and they gave out a report that I should be hanged within a few days. But, a gentleman then in town, one Mr. Buchanan, who held a secret correspondence with my lord Dundee, sent his lordship intelligence of this their resolution concerning me.

That lord was then at the castle of Blair of Atholl; and having notice of the danger I was in, wrote a letter to duke Hamilton, president of the council, desiring his grace to inform the board, "That if they "hanged captain Creichton, or (to use his own "homely expression) they touched a hair of his tail, "he would cut the laird of Blair, and the laird of "Pollock, joint by joint, and would send their limbs "in hampers to the council."

These two gentlemen having been taken prisoners at St. Johnstown, by my lord Dundee, were still kept in confinement. Whereupon the duke, though it was night, called the council, which met immediately, supposing that the business, which pressed so much, might relate to some express from court. But when the clerk read my lord Dundee's letter, they

Digitized by Google

appeared in great confusion: whereupon the duke said, "I fear we dare not touch a hair of Creichton; "for ye all know Dundee too well, to doubt whe- "ther he will be punctual to his word; and the two "gentlemen in his hands are too nearly allied to "some here, that their lives should be endangered on "this occasion." What his grace said was very true: for, if I remember right, the laird of Blair had married a daughter of a former duke of Hamilton. The issue of the matter was, that under this perplexity, they all cried out, "Let the fellow live a while "longer."

Not long after this, happened the battle of Gillicranky (or Killikranky) near the castle of Blair of Atholl; where the forces under the lord Dundee, consisting of no more than seventeen hundred foot (all Highlanders, except three hundred sent him from Ireland, under the command of colonel Cannon, when he expected three thousand, as I have mentioned) and forty-five horse, routed an army of five thousand men, with major general M'Coy * at their head; took fifteen hundred prisoners, and killed a great number, among whom colonel Balfour was one. M'Coy escaped, and fled that night twenty-five miles endwise, to the castle of Drummond.

* "A general officer, that had served long in Holland with "great reputation, and who was the piousest man I ever knew "in a military way, was sent down to command the army in "Scotland. He was one of the best officers of the age, when "he had nothing to do but to obey and execute orders; for he "was both diligent, obliging, and brave: but he was not so "fitted for command. His piety made him too apt to mistrust "his own sense; and to be too tender or rather fearful in any "thing where there might be a needless effusion of blood." Burnet, vol. iii, page 36.

But

Digitized by Google

But my lord Dundee did not live to see himself victorious *: for, as he was wheeling about a rock, over the enemy's heads, and making down the brae to attack them (they making a running fire) he was killed by a random shot, at the beginning of the action: yet his men discovered not his fall, till they had obtained the victory. The next day, though victorious, they suffered their prisoners to depart, on parole, that they would never take up arms against king James: colonel Fergusson only excepted, on account of his more than ordinary zeal for the new establishment.

King William, having heard of this defeat, said, "He knew the lord Dundee so well, that he must "have been either killed or mortally wounded; other-"wise, before that time, he would have been master "of Edinburgh."

I now desire leave to return to my own affairs. About four months after my examination, I was advised, in plain words, by the dukes of Hamilton and Queensberry, who were then going up to London, that I should bribe Melvil, then secretary of Scotland; with whom their graces likewise would use their interest, to get an order from king William for my

* He was mortally wounded in the engagement. The Highlanders, animated by their commander, gained a signal victory. Upon his asking how things went, he was told that all was well. "Then, said he, I am well;" and presently expired. He was a man of an enterprising genius, and his conduct was equal to his courage. He had a good deal of the spirit of his uncle, the famous James Graham, marquis of Montrose. He died July 6, 1689. (See a characteristick account of him, and an excellent description of the battle of Killikranky, in Dalrymple's Memoirs, p. 342, &c. 2d edit.) Granger, iv, 278. And see Burnet, iii, 37.

Digitized by Google

liberty. But I was so far from having money to bribe a courtier of the secretary's rank, that I had hardly enough to support myself. Whereupon my noble friend, the lord Kilsyth, who thought himself indebted to my fidelity for his life and fortune, was so extremely generous, as to make me a present of five hundred pounds, which I immediately sent to Melvil; who, thereupon, joining his interest with the good offices of the two dukes before mentioned, prevailed with king William to send down an order; upon the receipt of which, I was to be set at liberty by the council. But they would not obey it; alleging that the king was misinformed: and out of the abundance of their zeal, wrote to him, that if captain Creichton should obtain his liberty, he would murder all Scotland in one night.

Thus my hope and liberty vanished; for king William soon after going to Flanders, and not thinking it prudent to discredit the representation which the council had made of me, as so very dangerous a person, left me in the Tolbooth; though the two dukes, out of their great friendship (which I should be most ungrateful ever to forget) had both offered to answer body for body, for my peaceable demeanour. But notwithstanding all this, king William, for the reason before mentioned, left me prisoner in the Tolbooth, as I said; where I continued two years and a half longer, without one penny of money; though not without many friends, whose charity and generosity supported me under this heavy affliction.

My wife and two boys, with as many daughters, were in town all the time of my confinement. The boys died young, but the mother and the two girls lived to endure many hardships; having been twice plun-

Digitized by Google

plundered by the rabble, of the little substance they had left: however, they and myself were still providentially relieved by some friend or other; and particularly once by the lady Carnwath (mother of the present earl) who, when we had not one penny left to buy bread, sent us up a sack of meal, and a basket of fowl, sixty miles from Edinburgh.

My fellow prisoners and I, after the time of our examination by the council, were allowed, for four or five hours every day, to converse with each other, and with our friends: and when we had been three years in the Tolbooth, my companions being related to the best families in the kingdom, were at last permitted, on bail, to lodge in the city, with a sentry at each of their doors. But I was not allowed the same favour, till two months after; when duke Hamilton, still my friend, with much difficulty and strong application to the council, obtained it for me: and when the order was at last granted, I was at a great loss to find such a person for my bail whom the council would approve of; till the laird of Pettencrife, a gentleman whom I had never seen before, sent up his name (without any application from me) to the clerk, and was accordingly accepted.

I had not been two months discharged out of the Tolbooth, and removed to a private lodging in the town, with a sentry upon me, when the government, upon some pretence or other, filled the castle with a great number of persons of quality; among whom were the lords Kilsyth, Hume, and several others; and the Tolbooth again, with as many of inferiour note as it could hold.

In a week after I had been permitted to live in the city with my family, I found the sentry had or-

Digitized by Google

ders to keep me close, without allowing me to stir from my lodgings upon any pretence whatsoever: but when another regiment came to relieve that which was before upon duty, I bribed him who had been my keeper, at his going off, that he should tell the first who came in his place, that his orders were to "walk with me to any part of the town I pleased." This was accordingly done, and thenceforward I used to take my sentry along with me, and visit my old fellow prisoners, the Gillicrankymen, and sometimes stay with them all night; at other times, my friends would do the same at my lodgings; among whom the lord William Douglas often did me that honour: nay, sometimes, in company of some gentlemen, I would leave the sentry drinking with the footmen in an alehouse, at the back of the town wall, while we rambled nine or ten miles in the country, to visit some acquaintance or other; still taking care to return before two in the afternoon, which was the hour of parade, to save the sentry from danger.

Thus I spent above two months, till the day the government had filled the castle and the Tolbooth again, as I have mentioned already. As soon as I was told of my lord Kilsyth's imprisonment, I knew the danger I was in, and had just time to run with the sentry to a cellar, where I found twelve officers got together for shelter likewise from the storm, a little before me. We staid there close till night, and then dispatched my sentry, with captain Mair's footman, to the lady Lockhart's (who was married to the captain) four miles out of town, to let her know, that her husband would be at home that night, with twelve other cavaliers (for so in those days we affected

Digitized by Google

ed to style ourselves) to avoid being imprisoned in the Tolbooth.

When the message was delivered, the lady ordered three or four of her servants, to take the sentry up four pair of stairs, and to ply him well with drink. Accordingly they kept him drunk for twelve days and nights together, so that he neither saw me, nor I him, in all that time. Two days after we came to lady Lockhart's, I determined, against her and her friends advice, to return privately to Edinburgh, to discourse with the laird of Pettencrife, my bail: resolving at all adventures, that so generous a person should not be a sufferer on my account. I accordingly repaired, in the night, to the same alehouse, at the back of the town wall, and thence sent the footman, who attended me, to bring the laird thither. He presently came, with two other gentlemen in his company; and after drinking together for half an hour, he bid me "go whither I pleased, and God's "blessing along with me;" whereupon, thrusting me out at the door in a friendly manner, he added, that he would pay the hundred pounds, he was bound in, to the council, next morning, if demanded of him; which they accordingly did, and the money was paid.

I then returned to the company at my lady Lockhart's, and thence wrote to the two dukes before mentioned for their advice, what course to take? Their answer was, "That, in regard to my poor "family, I should make my escape to my own coun-"try, and there set potatoes, till I saw better times." At the end of twelve days, captain Mair and his eleven friends got over seas to St. Germains; when I likewise took my leave of them and the lady, to

Digitized by Google

make the best of my way for Ireland. But I bethought me of the poor sentry (to whom the twelve days we staid there seemed no longer than two or three, so well was he plied with drink) and calling for him, asked whether he would choose to share with me and my fortunes, or go back to the regiment, perhaps to be shot for neglect of his duty? He readily answered, that he would go with me whither ever I went; and not long after we came into Ireland, I had the good luck to get him made a sergeant of grenadiers, in the regiment formerly commanded by my lord Dunbarton, by a captain who was then gone thither for recruits; in which regiment he died a lieutenant some years after.

The lady, at parting, made me a present of a good horse, with ten dollars, to bear my charges on the way; and moreover hired a tenant's horse to carry the sentry to the borders. I durst not be seen to pass through Galloway, and therefore went by Carlisle to Whitehaven. Here I found an acquaintance, who was minister of the town, of the name of Marr; a gentleman of great worth and learning. Before the Revolution, he had been minister of a parish in Scotland, near the borders: but about the time of that event, the rabble, as he told me the story, came to his house, in the night, to rob and murder him; having treated others of his brethren, the episcopal clergy, before in that inhuman manner. He was a single man, and had but one man servant, whose business was to dress his meat, and make his bed; and while the villains were breaking into the house, he had just time to put on his breeches, stockings, and shoes, and no more; for by that time they were got in; when he thought it better to leap out

at

Digitized by Google

at the window, but half clothed as he was, than to expose his life to the fury of such, whose very mercies might be cruel. Thus he saved his life, and made his escape to the English side, with only four dollars in his pocket; leaving his goods, house, and parish, as plunder, to those saints; who, doubtless, looked on such as he was, as no other than a usurper of what, of right, pertained to them; pursuant to the maxim, "That dominion is founded in grace."

And here I beg leave to relate the treatment which another episcopal clergyman received from that tribe, about the same time: his name was Kirkwood, whom I likewise knew, before the Revolution, minister of a parish in Galloway, in Scotland, and afterward rector in the county of Fermanagh, in Ireland. Among other good qualities, this gentleman was a very facetious person; and by his presence of mind, in making use of this talent, he had the good fortune to save both his life and goods, from the fury of those godly men, who then thought all things their own. When they broke into the house, he was in bed; and sitting up in his shirt, desired leave to speak a few words before he died; which (I cannot tell how it happened) they granted, and he spoke to this effect; "That he had always prayed to God, he "might die in his bed; adding that he had in his "house as good ale and brandy as was in all Scot-"land; and therefore hoped the worthy gentlemen "would do him the honour to drink with him, be-"fore they did any thing rashly."

This facetious speech, which they little expected from him in the article of so much danger as then threatened him, had the luck to divert them from their bloody purpose, and to make them comply with

Digitized by Google

with his request; so that after drinking plentifully, they said he was a hearty cheel; and left him in quiet possession of his house and goods. But he durst not trust his talent to another trial, lest the next company might not be influenced as this first had been; and therefore, as soon as it was day, made off, with his family and effects, in the best manner he could; and rested not until he was safe in Ireland.

I could not forbear relating these stories, from the gentlemen's own mouths, as I might do others of the same kind, upon my own knowledge; although they are contradictory to what the preachers of the new established kirk have so confidently given out. They would fain have the world believe, that they showed great indulgence to the episcopal clergy, at the Revolution, and for several years after. But they must grant me and others leave not to believe them: nor ought they to be angry, if I give the reader a farther idea of them, and of the spirit that reigned in synods, conventions, or general assemblies, of their kirk.

During my confinement in the Tolbooth, a general assembly was called; to which my lord Lothian, as I was informed afterward, was sent commissioner from king William. His lordship's instructions were, to signify to them the king's desire, that as many of the episcopal clergy as would take the oath of allegiance to him might keep possession of their several parishes. To this the members answered in a disdainful manner, "What! shall we suffer any scabbed "sheep among us? Na, na, nat ane;" and thereupon sent two of their brethren to king William, who was then in Flanders, to move him for more favours

Digitized by Google

favours to the kirk, and power farther to oppress the episcopal clergy. But that prince told them, in plain terms, that he had been imposed upon, in granting to the kirk the favours she had already got; and withall commanded them to let the general assembly know, that it was his will and pleasure, that they should live peaceably with those who were willing to live so with them; otherwise he would make them know, that he was their master.

With this unwelcome answer from king William, the two spiritual envoys returned to those who sent them; and at the same time, or soon after, the prince dispatched an order to the commissioner to dissolve the assembly, if he found them persisting in their severity toward the episcopal clergy.

As soon as the legates delivered the message, all in the assembly began to speak out with the greatest boldness imaginable; saying, "That the king durst "not have sent them such an answer, if he had not "an army at his back." Whereupon the commissioner dissolved the synod; and in the king's name, commanded all the members to depart to their several homes.

But, instead of obeying that order, they all went in a body, with that poor weak creature the lord Crawford at their head, to the market cross; and there published a protestation, declaring, that the king had no authority in church affairs, nor any right [illegible] assembly.

[illegible] as it was told me, not only to [illegible] of the spirit that reigned in [illegible] now in Scotland, as I have [illegible] do justice to the memory of [illegible] may be the more acceptable, as

Digitized by Google

as coming from one who was in a contrary interest. And, indeed, I have so good an opinion of that prince, as to believe he would have acted much better than he did, with regard to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution in Scotland, if he had been permitted to govern by his own opinions.

But now to come to the conclusion of my story. The Hollantide * after I arrived in Ireland, my wife and two daughters followed me; and we settled in the county of Tyrone, with my father (who died two years afterward) on a small freehold; where I made a hard shift to maintain them, with industry and even manual labour, for about twelve years, till my wife died, and my daughters were married, which happened not very long after I became a widower.

I am at present in the eighty-third year of my age; still hated by those people who affirm the old covenanters to have been unjustly dealt with; and therefore believe a great number of improbable stories concerning me; as that I was a common murderer of them and their preachers, with many other false and improbable stories. But the reader I hope, from whom I have not concealed any one transaction or adventure that happened to me among those rebellious people, or misrepresented the least circumstance, as far as my memory could serve me; will judge whether he has reason to believe me to have been such a person as they represented me; and to hate me, as they do, upon that account. And my comfort is, that I can appeal from their unjust tribunal, to the mercy of God; before whom, by the course

* The feast of all saints.

of

Digitized by Google

of nature, I must soon appear; who knows the integrity of my heart and that my actions (condemned by them) were, as far as my understanding could direct me, meant for the good of the church, and the service of my king and country.

And although such people hate me because they give credit to the false reports raised concerning me; another comfort left me in my old age is, that I have constantly preserved (and still do so) the love and esteem of all honest and good men, to whom I have had the happiness at any time to be known.

JOHN CREICHTON.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

M. Brown, Printer, St. John's square.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Z 74
169

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

RETURN TO → CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT
202 Main Library

LOAN PERIOD 1 HOME USE	2	3
4	5	6

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS
1-month loans may be renewed by calling 642-3405
6-month loans may be recharged by bringing books to Circulation Desk
Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

APR 9 1981

REC CIR MAR 17 '81

OCT 0 4 1990

Nov. 25. 1990

AUTO DISC NOV 20 '90

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
FORM NO. DD6, 60m, 3/80 BERKELEY, CA 94720

REC. CIR. JUN 30 '78 ... of California Berkeley

Digitized by Google

UC BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C031371204

Digitized by Google